

# Halofall Star Effect

by jcrighter

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Summary: What happens when some of the greatest sci-fi characters are brought into the same universe? Read to find out. Based in the Halo Universe, these character must work together to defeat common enemies and make the return trips home.

## 1. Chapter 1: Prologue

**\*\*This is more of a pilot for my newest story. Based in the world of Halo, the greatest sci-fi characters come together to stop the rise of the Promethean Knights, a combined group of the characters' enemies. This is a crossover of some of the greatest video game characters ever created.\*\***

**\*\*This first chapter will introduce the Halo characters and some Titanfall characters.\*\***

**\*\*Please review and enjoy.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from any of the games but I do own my original contain.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter One: Prologue\*\***

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"Admiral Lasky," the crewman's voice torn Admiral Thomas Lasky's head out of space and back into the bridge, "We are receiving a S.O.S. from an unauthorized ship. None of its readings match ours in anyway."

"Is it audio?" he asked the man from his chair.

"I think so. I'm getting a lot of interference." He said.

"Roland," the admiral looked to the silver pedestal to his right, "give it a try."

The avatar of the \_Infinity\_'s AI, Roland, appeared in his WWII-era flight suit and helmet, "Already on it, sir, patching you through now."

"This is Vice Admiral Marcus Graves of the M-COR \_Birmingham\_. We are running on fumes and need emergency pick up. We are currently adrift in unknown space." The deep voice bellowed over the intercom of the bridge. Roland stated it was a loop but he can triangulate the signal in a few moments.

"Do it. Whoever this Graves fellow is, he speaks English. That makes him most likely human." Lasky stated, "Have emergency crews on standby. They might have injured or worst."

"Yes, sir." Roland saluted, "Shall I set a course?"

Lasky nodded and the AI disappeared to perform his other duties. The deck crew shot their fingers around their keyboards and terminals as they calculated the slipspace jump they would need to reach the \_Birmingham\_. Once everything was in order, a purple wormhole appeared before them and the Infinity shot inside.

**\*\*On the Secondary Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the M-COR \*\*\_Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In Unknown Space\*\***

Vice Admiral Graves thumbs his fingers on the arm of the chair. He was tired from not sleeping and working triple shifts just to keep his ship moving. They had moved all power to the engines, including the lights. The only light source was the red hue of the emergency lights.

His deck crew was very limited. Most of them were killed when they destroyed the IMC Spectre base six months ago. Being stranded out in the middle of unknown space, there wasn't much room for recruitment.

Besides, he wasn't really the most liked person on the \_Birmingham\_.

Seven months ago, he held his rank for the Interstellar Manufacturing Company, the IMC. The IMC was a private company that created many weapon systems for the military. Only those out in the Frontier knew that they had been creating their own private army underneath the nose of the very government that was funding it. The \_Birmingham\_ had been one his gifts to his new cause.

He deflected from the IMC afterwards, joining the group known as the Militia. The Militia was former IMC members that rose up to fight back against its private army. The Militia only recently gained some victories over the IMC by destroying their refueling base on Demeter, stopping any reinforcements from reaching them out in the Frontier,

and Graves more recent attack on their Spectre base, putting an end to their robotic army.

The only problem with destroying the only refueling base they knew of was that it left them without fuel as well. Ever since the Spectre base mission, Graves and his flagship sailed through space, attempting to find a home. So far they hadn't found one.

"Marcus," he finally heard the female's voice calling him. He looked up to see the dark ponytailed girl looking at him, "it has been six months. We are running dangerously low on fuel and food. The men are getting restless and scared."

"I know, Sarah." He grunted, "Anything from the transponder?"

"Lost its signal a day ago." She responded. Technically, Sarah shouldn't even be on the bridge. She isn't a deck officer but she had proved herself more than once before. Graves moving her up was one of the first things he did when he took over.

"Dammit." He muttered, "Any more bad news?"

She looked at her terminal. The screen was dimmed to nearly black, leaving Graves wondering how she even could read anything on it. She went to open her mouth to say something but her facial structure changed like she was studying for a very hard math test. She was mumbling to herself and Graves swore he heard, "That can't be right."

"What's going on, Lieutenant." He gave her the rank. He read her file when he was with IMC. He knew how dangerous she was and how good she was at her job.

"It's probably nothing but I'm getting all sort of strange reading coming from directly in front of us." She was thumbing through more screens and, looking around, Graves could see that the other five deck crewmen were getting the same thing, "Sir, we need to stop the ship."

"What's going on, Sarah." He used her first name, her only name, to get her attention away from the screen.

"I don't know but something is coming our way and it's a big one."

Graves keyed the transponder on his chair, "Engineering, stop this ship, now."

"What's going on, Admiral?" A deep voice called up through the speaker.

"I don't know. Just do it." Was his answer. He felt a slight shift in the ship's slow movement as it came to a slow stop, "What do we got here?"

"A large energy signal coming from out of system but it's moving towards us at an increasingly fast pace." Sarah stated.

Before Graves could answer, a purple wormhole opened directly in front of the Birmingham. He stood up and stared at the video

screen. Sarah increased the power slightly so they could actually see the image. At first, nothing happened. Just the purple hole in space, floating in front of their ship.

The next movement was one of Graves's scariest moments of his life.

Shooting out of the hole like a runaway train, a massive ship, three times the size of the Birmingham, appeared before them. The giant ship was coming right for them. With all their systems offline, the Birmingham wouldn't be able to make any evasive maneuvers. The monster ship was going to kill them all.

But at the last moment, the new ship curved itself around the Birmingham. It passed over them by several meters, mere inches in space logic. As the ship came to a stop, Graves let out the breath he been holding for the pass several seconds. He heard the same sound coming from everyone on deck.

"Lieutenant," he looked at Sarah, "What the hell is that?"

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"What the hell is that?" Lasky stated as the ship came to a stop over it. The ship marked as the Birmingham on the side was three times smaller than the Infinity with orange stripes in several locations throughout the hull. The front of the ship was thin and narrow and looked similar to a UNSC MAC cannon but the back of the ship was larger with four engine coils pointing back. Lasky knew that he was looking at something very different than any ship that he had seen before.

Roland appeared next to him to answer the question, "This is the M-COR Birmingham, apparently. Besides that, I have no further answers for you, sir."

"Thanks, Roland." Lasky said as the Smart AI disappeared back into the ship's systems, "Comms, can we raise them?"

"I'm trying, sir." A female crewman yelled from across the bridge.

"Try harder." Lasky barked.

A few moments ticked by, "Admiral, I got Vice Admiral Marcus Graves on the line."

Lasky turned and nodded at her, "Patch him through."

**\*\*Please tell what you think. If you think I can approve anything or take something out, let me know. Also, if you have any characters that you would like to see in the Halo Universe I would like to hear them. I will try my best to piece them into the storyline.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading.\*\***

## 2. Chapter 2: Discovery

**\*\*Wow. That's all I can say about the amount of people that have already viewed my fanfiction and the others that followed/favorite. I feel so honored that people took the time out of their days to read something that I wrote and reviewed it.\*\***

**\*\*That being said, I've decided to keep this story going and the chapters will be a lot longer. Also, I changed the name from Halofall Effect Wars to Halofall Star Effect. It's a little easy to say and sounds a little better.\*\***

**\*\*This chapter will include scenes from Mass Effect and Star Wars.\*\***

**\*\*Please review and tell me how I am doing. Any comment would help make this and other stories better.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading and enjoy.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from the stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Two: Discovery\*\***

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*On route to the Mu Relay\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Commander John Shepherd kept his eyes forward as the SSV Normandy activated its FTL drive. He felt the body of the ship shift as it accelerated through space. He wore his Alliance uniform but he removed the ribbons and pins that once decorated the breast of the jacket. As of now, the Alliance and everything it stood for was behind him. If he failed, he could never go back.

Neither could his crew, for that matter. All of them had committed treason and mutiny with him. They had a choice and they made the choice to follow him. He only hoped that he wasn't leading them to their own deaths or worse.

That last thought hit him hard. He already lost one crew member on this wild goose chase across the galaxy. He couldn't let that happen to anyone else. He wouldn't let that happen to anyone else.

"Sir, the Normandy will arrive at the Mu Relay in one hour." Joker, his helmsman, turned his head, "You might want to say something to the crew."

Shepherd nodded. Joker's right, he thought to himself. They need to know that what they were doing was right. He needed to tell himself that.

He took a deep breath and nodded back at Joker, giving him the okay to open the intercom system up. Joker gave him a thumbs-up as he

piloted the ship. Shepherd used his years of Alliance officer training to straighten himself like a statue and spoke, "Attention, this is your captain, John Shepherd, speaking. I am sure that a lot of you are having second thoughts about what we are doing. We defied the Council. We stole an Alliance ship. If we fail, we will be trialed and jailed for war crimes but you know that this is the right thing to do. Not for us. Not for the Council. Not for humanity but for every single living thing in the galaxy. We are not just fighting for our lives. We are fighting for the lives of our brothers, our sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, and complete strangers. If we fail, there will be no trial. We would not be jailed. We would lose the entire galaxy. Now, Saren wants to unleash the Reapers and the geth on the Citadel and, dammit, I'm not letting that happen. His matriarch tried to stop us on Noveria. She failed. His Thorian tried to stop us on Feros. It failed. His krogan tried to stop us on Virmire. They failed. We're following him to Ilos so he can fail. I know the costs of those missions. Every single one of us left something behind on each of those planets in the form of memories, morals, and friends."

He stopped. He felt the dread of being a commander brought. He felt like he had failed, yet the mission on Virmire was a success. He needed to tell the crew that. He left his head back up and straighten his body again, "Saren needs to answer for the crimes he had committed. He needs to pay for the death of Matriarch Benezia. He needs to pay for the death of the citizens of Freedom's Progress. He needs to pay for the death of Gunnery Chief Ashley Williams. And I promise you with every ounce of my being that he will answer for those crimes and every single one of you will help me do it."

He paused for a moment to let it all sink in. He wasn't sure if he was doing it for his crew or for himself, "Return to your duties. We will reach the Mu Relay in under an hour so be rested and ready. Shepherd out."

He didn't even look at Joker but he felt his eyes on him as he left the cockpit. He knew that he was watching because, upon entering the Combat Information Center, every single crewmember looked at him and saluted. He stopped at his executive officer, Navigator Charles Pressly. The bald man in the Alliance uniform stood tall and proud, "Commander Shepherd, I will follow you to hell and back and I'm pretty sure I speak for every member of your crew. We got your back, sir, one hundred percent."

Shepherd returned the salute. He remembered the first time he spoke to Pressly, he had been a little harsh against having aliens on board. Only a few months later and he was willing to die to save every single one of them. Shepherd hoped that the rest of his crew had changed in the same way, "That means a lot, Press. Thank you."

The man smiled and nodded. He turned around to the members of the CIC, "Alright, ladies, it's show time. I need everything in tip top shape before we head into that Relay. We don't know what the hell Saren will have on the other side but we will be ready. Tanaka, get our shields ready. Whatever your name is, get out weapons on their mark. Come on, people,â€|"

A chorus of "Yes, sir!"'s bellowed out of every member on the deck and Shepherd smiled. Pressly's force disappeared behind the heavy

elevator doors. He pressed the bottom for third deck, where his quarters were. Any second thoughts he had about his crew was washed away and replaced with something else.

\_Hope\_, Anderson's voice echoed through his head, answering the question he had.

He smiled all during the elevator ride to his cabin. It was the first time he had smiled since Virmire.

"We're going to stop him," He muttered to himself, "for you, Ash."

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the \*\*\_\*\*Millennium Falcon\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unknown planet\*\***

**\*\*In a galaxy far, far away SWU\*\***

"I don't know, furball." The Corellian man barked, "but the kid wanted us to come here so we came. You know him. He can't walk three meters without us having bail him out. The Death Star. Hoth. Bespin. Endor. You name it, I saved him."

He looked to his furry Wookiee companion who gave a roar in response, "Yes, I know, technically, I was frozen in carbonite on Bespin and that Lando used my ship to blow up the second Death Star over Endor so let me rephrase that. You name it, the \_Falcon \_saved him. Happy?"

Chewbacca gave a slight growl that Han knew was a sign of pleasure. The Wookiee always likes it when he proves his partner wrong. Han sometimes wonders if he owed him the life debt instead of the other way around.

"The dash is lighting up like a Coruscant night club after dark." The smuggler smirked, "These are some of the crazy readings I have ever seen."

The Wookiee bellowed in agreement.

As the \_Falcon\_ begun to break through the planet's atmosphere, Han muttered under his breath, "I have a bad feeling about this."

Han piloted the upgraded Corellian freighter towards the location that they were told to reach. As he zoomed pass a small mountain range, his jaw dropped. He could believe his eyes at what he saw. He had to double check with Chewy to make sure he was actually awake.

The structure was as big as a flagship and spanned most of the valley. The silver tower at the center of the base sprouted out like a massive flower. Surrounding the tower were four landing pads spaced out evenly around it. On the southwestern pad, a bird like courier vessel was docked. The other three were empty.

What's Kyle Katarn doing here, he thought to himself.

Han had Chewbacca land their ship on the southeastern pad. The ship shuttered as the landing gear kissed the metal ground below them. Han took a look at Chewy, "Get your gear. I'll wake the princess."

Chewbacca growled and grumbled as Han left the cockpit, heading for his chambers. He didn't even knock before entering and stopped at the doorway. Standing at the base of the bed was a brown haired woman dressed in dark brown slacks and a dark green vest. Under the vest was a black shirt that cut off at the elbows. A blaster pistol hung from her hip like it was normal to carry one around and three brown pouches were attached to the other side. Her black boots came up to her mid-calves and her hair was tied back in a ponytail, stopped just below her shoulder blades.

She looked up at him and smiled, "You scruffy looking nerf herder, don't you know how to knock?"

"Last time I checked, this is my room, Princess." He smirked at her as she approached him. She planted a light kiss on his lips, "I haven't seen you dressed like this since Endor."

She smiled at him, "Well, don't get used to it. If my brother hadn't thought this was so important, I would still be on Coruscant, kissing ass."

"And here I was thinking you wanted to see your husband."

She hit him playfully and pushed passed him. Han grabbed his own blaster off the dresser and fastened it to his belt as he moved through the ship. He wouldn't admit it to Leia or Chewy but he felt comfortable for the first time in a long time. He wore his usual clothes of brown pants, white shirt, and black vest but that wasn't what made the smuggler comfortable.

He was comfortable because, for the first time in months, he was home. He hadn't been anywhere near the Falcon since he took command of the Mon Remonda and her New Republic fleet. Since then, the Falcon had been housed on Leia's private cruiser orbiting the Republic capital of Coruscant. He never said it but letting Leia hold the Falcon was his insurance policy. She can't leave him if she holds his most valuable prize.

He descended down the exit ramp after Leia and found that Chewy, with his bowcaster strapped to his furry back, was waiting for them with the golden protocol droid, C3-PO.

He breathed in the strange environment and spoke, "Alright, let's see what Luke wants."

"I think I can answer that." They turned to see the speaker. Dressed in a tan shirt with a right brown shoulder pad and dark brown pants was a brown haired Jedi with a groomed beard. A silver cylinder hung from his belt hip and Han knew that it was his lightsaber, the Jedi's weapon of choice. Before he could say another word, he was nearly tackled by a seven foot tall Wookiee. He laughed as the hairy beast let him go, "I'm glad to see you, too, buddy."

"Master Katarn," Leia bowed, the muscle memory of being a Senator working through her, "it is good to see you again."



"Likewise, Senator, but, please, it's just Kyle." The Jedi smiled at her. He looked at Han, "You got here fast."

"The \_Falcon \_ran the Kessel run inâ€| he started but Kyle waved him off.

"â€|in twelve parsecs. Yeah, I know that story." Kyle was almost as cunning as Han. Almost.

"On to business, though." Kyle turned serious and waved for them to follow him into the structure, "A month ago, Luke woke up and felt a 'disturbance in the Force' and set off on an unknown mission. Like always, we shrugged it off since he always feels 'something' in the Force. We didn't really expect him to find anything."

"Until he called about the alien base thingy on a strange planet." Han finished and Kyle nodded.

"When he relayed it to the Council, I volunteered to take my students and join him in studying it. We were amazed just as you were by its appearance." They ascended a metal staircase. Kyle was in the lead as Han and Leia followed close behind. Chewbacca lingered behind with C3-PO to make sure the strange robot didn't get lost.

"Did you figure anything out about it?" Leia asked.

"A little bit. Luke will be able to explain more when we get to him. I'm still trying to wrap my head around all this." He answered truthfully. Kyle was always one to speak the truth, even before learning the ways of the Jedi.

They all followed him into a turbolift and he waved his hand over a strange symbol on the wall, "This place reacts to the Force. Just the slightest use of it can power this turbolift."

The lift reached the tower's summit and stopped. A pair of double doors slid apart and Kyle beckoned them to follow him into a large circular room. Strange terminals lined the edges of the room and four viewports that looked down on each of the landing docks. Han was starting to have that "bad feeling" again.

That ended when he saw Luke. Even though he is now the most important figure in the galaxy, he still looked like the little farm boy he met on Tatoonie. His sandy colored hair was pulled back behind his ears so you could see his bright blue eyes. He wore his light tan pants and white shirt, similar to what he had worn on Tatoonie. Han was happy to see him in anything but that black Jedi outfit he wore on his return trip to Tatoonie.

The kid smiled, "Han, Leia, Chewy, Threepeio, you made it."

Leia threw her arms around her twin brother and kissed his cheek, "We came as soon as we got your message."

"Good, I was afraid you didn't get it, especially since the Council is busy elsewhere." The Jedi said. Han thought to himself, Luke is the leader of the Jedi Council so you would think that they would be throwing any resource his way. He knew that the Jedi were busy dealing with affairs all over the galaxy. Leia had told him how two

of them had arrived on Corsucant just hours before she left. He didn't know what it was but it had to be important enough to ignore the Jedi Grand Master, himself.

"So, Luke, you care to explain what's going on with this 'place'?" Han asked him.

Luke nodded, "Of course. I still haven't figured out who built this place since Artoo hadn't been able to dig anything up in its archives. Since the place reacts to the Force, they had to be some sort of Force sensitive people."

As he explained, he moved from terminal to terminal, still deep in his research, "I don't know what any of this means but I do something. Those landing pads down there are connected to these terminals. I only tapped into them once and it was on the terminal that was attached to the pad that my X-wing was on. Once I activated it, an energy beam shot down to my X-wing and vanished. I raced down to the pad and found that it wasn't invisible. It was completely gone."

"Glad you took Artoo out of it first." Han remarked and Luke nodded, "Now, you have my baby docked on one of those 'things'?"

"It won't react unless you give it enough Force energy." Luke explained, "I don't know where it went but it's still active. According to my helmet's display, it's still out there somewhere. I just don't know where."

"So it's a teleporter of some kind." Leia wondered as she looked out at the empty platform.

"That's my theory as well." Luke nodded at his sister. He looked away and paused for several minutes, thinking really hard about his next choice of words, "That is why I asked you to come. I don't know who else would trust me enough to do what I am able to ask them."

"What, Luke?" Han asked but he had a feeling he knew the answer.

"I want you to follow me through the teleporter."

**\*\*How was that? I figured I would base the Mass Effect timeline before the end of the ME1. I thought that Saren was a cool bad guy to chase throughout the story and I figured I would bring him in on all this fun.\*\***

**\*\*The Star Wars Universe is based after the fall of the Empire, in case you didn't get that.\*\***

**\*\*I really hope you guys enjoyed this chapter and will continue to read.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading and don't forget to leave me some feedback. Any kind of review is a good review since it will help me improve future chapters.\*\***

### 3. Chapter 3: First Contact

**\*\*This chapter will go back to the Halo and Titanfall meeting. They**

will exchange some background information, including how the  
\*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_\*\* entered the Halo Universe.\*\*

\*\*I really hope you enjoy this chapter and, like always, please leave  
me a review.\*\*

\*\*I do not own anything from the stories but I do own any original  
content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Three: First Contact\*\*

\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\*

\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

"Patch him through." Lasky told the officer and she nodded. The view  
screen shifted from a scene of the outside space and the \_Birmingham\_  
to a dark red room with a dark skinned man with a grey moustache  
standing in it. Lasky shot a salute, "Greetings, I am Admiral Thomas  
Lasky of the UNSC \_Infinity\_. I'm sorry for the scare. We didn't  
realize how close our slipspace jump was to you."

"Well, you didn't crash into us so I'll say that's a good thing." The  
man stated, "I'm Vice Admiral Marcus Graves of the M-COR  
\_Birmingham\_. We have been adrift for months now and we are running  
low of fuel and food. If you are willing, we would greatly accept any  
help you can offer us."

"Good to meet you, Vice Admiral. I'm sending my transports to your  
hanger bays with fresh food and supplies for your crew but I would  
like to invite you on board the \_Infinity\_ for a more face-to-face  
meeting." Lasky told him.

Graves nodded, "Once my men are taken care of, I will head right  
over. I'm looking forward to this meeting, Admiral."

"Likewise, I'm sure we have a lot to discuss. I'm sending out towing  
cables and my engineers will attach them to your ship. We will tow  
you to the nearest UNSC fueling dock and get you fixed up." Lasky  
promised, "Now, if you excuse me, Vice Admiral, I need to personally  
look over the transports."

"No problem at all, Admiral." Graves gave him a salute.

Lasky returned it, "Lasky out."

The transmission was cut and the view screen returned to the  
\_Birmingham\_. He looked around and gave the proper people the proper  
orders before heading for the hanger bay. He took the elevator down  
the few dozen decks until he reached his destination. As the elevator  
rolled down, he called Roland up, "Roland, have our sleepy friend  
meet us in Hanger Bay 4C."

"Yes, sir." The orange avatar saluted and disappeared.

By the time Lasky made it to the hanger, his friend had already  
beaten him. Dressed in his olive green armor, he stood at seven feet  
tall and, with the suit on, weighed in at about a metric ton. His

face was covered by a similar green helmet with an orange visor, hiding any facial features. Strapped to his back was a Battle Rifle and a magnum hung from his left hip.

The giant saluted Lasky as he approached, "Admiral Lasky."

Lasky returned the salute, "Good to see you, Chief."

"Likewise, sir."

"You got down here pretty quick." Lasky pointed out, beckon him to follow him towards a nearby Pelican. He spotted several troops loading the various Pelicans with cargo crates full of food and supplies.

"Once we spotted the Birmingham, I headed for the armory. I wasn't sure if it was hostile or not." He said, "One can't be too careful."

"Wise words, Chief. How's your friend in there?" he pointed to Master Chief's helmet.

Chief answered by reached back and pulled out a data chip from the back of his helmet. Out of the blue ring, a holographic image of short haired female appeared. The AI smiled at him, "Fit and ready for service, Admiral."

"Good to have you back, Cortana." Lasky told her, "Looks like Halsey was able to rebuild you."

"Yeah, I was all comfortable with being dead until I realized there was no snack bar. Besides, who will be around to keep this guy in check?" She gave Chief a small smirk and looked back at Lasky, "What do you need from us, sir?"

Lasky nodded, "You always read my mind. I need you both to go over to the Birmingham for two reasons. First, I want you to see if you can dig into their files a little bit. I want to know who they are, why they are here, and where did they come from. Second, I want them to know that we are not to be crossed. Seeing one of our best Spartan IIs will give them that message. Am I clear?"

Cortana nodded and Chief plugged her back into his helmet, "Crystal, sir."

"Good, I want a full report before you get back. I don't like surprises, Chief."

"I agree."

**\*\*In Hanger Bay 2\*\***

**\*\*Of the M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In a unknown galaxy\*\***

Sarah and Graves entered the hanger bay just as the strange ships touched down. The grey colored transports looked like birds to Sarah but still nothing like she had ever seen before. They were far more high tech than anything they had on the Birmingham, except maybe

the Titans. She felt the hair on her neck stand up when she thought about who they might be letting on board their ship.

Just moments ago, as they headed down the emergency stairs, Sarah and Graves had been silent until she ruined that, "Sir, do you think that they could be the IMC?"

Graves had shaken his head, "Of course not, Lieutenant. The IMC don't have ships that size that can fly out of wormholes. I think we are dealing with a whole new faction in this galaxy. Most of all, they are willing to help us. We are not in a position to deny help from anyone."

He had a point, she thought, but she still couldn't shake the bad feeling she was having. The first transport's ramp came down and green armored men poured out. Each one of them had cargo crates in their hands. The second transport dropped a large crate in one spot from under its belly before landing in a clear location. More men came pouring out with crates from that one.

The process repeated a few more times and Sarah knew that the same was happening in the ships other two hangers. The last transport was what caught her eye. The last soldier to step out was a mountain of man in dark green armor that covered his entire body. He was armed to the teeth, if you could see his teeth, in weapons and munitions. He carried three crates with no problem while his men were struggling with one. Sarah looked at Graves and could tell that he was looking at the same person.

The armored man dropped his crates and pointed to a few of the men, ordering them to do something that they couldn't hear. Once his orders were started to be carried out, he turned towards them and made his way across the hanger bay. He stopped two meters away from them and saluted, "I am Master Chief Petty Officer Sierra-117 and I am the de facto ambassador from the \_Infinity\_. You must be Vice Admiral Graves?"

Graves nodded and shook the man's hand, "Pleasure to meet you, Master Chief. This is my first lieutenant, Sarah. Welcome aboard the \_Birmingham\_ and thank you for your aid."

"It is no problem at all." Chief said, "I was told to escort you personally to the \_Infinity\_ to speak with Admiral Lasky."

"Lead the way, Chief." Graves nodded.

**\*\*In Hanger Bay 2\*\***

**\*\*Of the M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Chief used his helmet to display a silent message to Cortana. The words came up on his Heads-Up-Display in the bottom left hand corner, "Did you get anything?"

"Tons. Dare is going to have a field day with all this. I'm already creating a report for Lasky to read while we bring Graves on board. We might have to distract them a bit once on board, though." The words of Cortana appeared below his own, "I didn't realize you were

such a gifted speaker."

"It helps when your AI unit tells you exactly what to say."

"I knew you missed me."

**\*\*In the Meeting Room\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky had his team meet him in the meeting room fifteen minutes before Graves would arrive. He knew that Graves was bringing only one other person with him, claiming he didn't really have that many people left, so Lasky only had two people join him. The first was his ship's Office of Naval Intelligence member Captain Veronica Dare. Dare had only been on the \_Infinity\_ for a few months before now. The second was Commander Sarah Palmer, leader of his Spartan operations and a Spartan IV herself.

The two girls stood at his sides with Dare on his left and Palmer on his right. Lasky brought up a datapad with Cortana's report on it, "Here's what we know: The M-COR is a group of former soldiers known as the Militia. They have only one purpose and that is to destroy all IMC activities in the Frontier. IMC stands for Industrial Manufacturing Company."

"I've never heard of them." Dare admitted.

"You wouldn't." Lasky said, thinking about his next choice of words, "They're not from around here."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"According to the data that Cortana dug up, they went through a wormhole about two months ago with the hopes it would take them to somewhere with fuel." He explained, "Where ever that wormhole was, it brought them here."

"So they're from another galaxy?" Palmer asked.

Lasky shook his head, "Cortana thinks they are from a whole different universe."

"Admiral, that's impossible," claimed Palmer.

"She found files connecting them to a planet that they call Earth with similar structure to our own Earth. That would explain why they speak English and why their ship is called \_Birmingham\_." He explained.

"I hope this Vice Admiral will be able to clear some things up." Dare said as Lasky received a call on his comm link.

He looked at them, "They will be here in five minutes. Chief is escorting them in, now."

On cue, five minutes later, the Spartan appeared in the door and stepped aside so Lasky could have his first real glimpse of the

Militia leader. Graves wore a black uniform with red-orange trends around the edges. He carried a pistol on his left hip but Lasky could tell it was deactivated.

Graves's companion was a female with brown hair back in a ponytail. She wore a similar uniform to Graves but Lasky could tell that she would rather be fixing something. She reminded him of a girl that his older brother used to date. She used to work all day in a car garage and had that greasy look to her. Looking at Graves's companion, he got the same feel from her.

"Vice Admiral Marcus Graves," Lasky smiled, "it is a pleasure to have you on board our ship."

"The pleasure is all mine. My ship and I would still be free floating through space if it wasn't for you and your ship." Graves responded and pointed to the girl next to him, "This is one of the few officers I have left, Lieutenant Sarah."

Lasky waited a second, hoping that Graves would give a last name. When he realized that Sarah didn't have one, he introduced his own officers, "You already met Master Chief. To my left is Captain Veronica Dare of the Office of Naval Intelligence. To my right is Commander Sarah Palmer, commander of all Spartan operations coming from the \_Infinity\_."

"It is very nice to meet you all." Graves sounded and they all took seats at the table, except Chief who preferred to stand by the exit. Lasky knew that Cortana was recording everything that was going on in the room.

"So, Vice Admiral, let's start with history." Lasky told his opposite.

Graves nodded and went first and, for the most, his history of Earth matched up with Lasky's to the tee. The only difference was when he got to space travel, "Hammon Engineering begun to move their business elsewhere in the galaxy. That led to them creating colonies in a zone known as the Frontier. Out in the Frontier, Hammon Engineering became the Industrial Manufacturing Company and started using the lawless Frontier as a staging area for their armies. The colonist disliked being pushed around by some corporation and formed the M-COR, or the Militia as the IMC started to call them. Seven months ago, I was a member of IMC until a good friend of mine opened my eyes to their evil before dying. In his death, came the destruction of the Demeter fueling station. I took over his position in the Militia and used my intelligence from IMC to attack their major manufacturing base, crippling their hold on the Frontier."

He paused to let that sink in, "A few months later, we were drifting through the Frontier, running dangerously low on fuel, when we got stuck in the gravity well of a large wormhole. It was about three times large than the hole you created when you almost crashed into us. With no other option, we sailed into the hole."

"And that's how you got here." Lasky finished for him and Graves nodded. Lasky let out a deep breath because he knew he was going to need the time to think on the next words. He had to explain to this man that he was still in the same galaxy, just a different universe. He looked at Dare and she nodded.

She cleared her throat, "Vice Admiral, your history is very similar to our own, minus the Frontier. After we discovered slipspace travel, we fell into an all-out war with a group called the Covenant. The Covenant was a collection of different aliens that all follow similar religious backgrounds. They crushed us to near extinction until the Covenant had some inter-rank fighting. With the help of the Sangheili, we were able to push back the Covenant and win the war."

Graves crossed his brows. Lasky could tell he was thinking hard about everything Dare had just told him. He opened his mouth to speak but stopped. He shook his head before speaking, "So you're saying that this is still the Milky Way. We're just in a different universe?"

"It would appear that way, Vice Admiral." Lasky stated.

Graves looked at Sarah and nodded at her. She returned the nod and smiled. He returned his stare to the UNSC officers, "How do we get home?"

"We don't know but we will try and help however we can." Lasky answered, "For now, that will be getting your ship to a refueling and refitting yard ASAP. Palmer, are the tows in place?"

The Spartan IV nodded, "Yes, sir. Engineering has report that the \_Birmingham\_ would be able to follow us into a slipspace jump."

"Excellent. Roland," the orange hologram appeared on the table, nearly giving Graves a heart attack, "find us the nearest refueling and refitting dock. Set a course but don't launch until I give the order. Got it?"

"Yes, sir." The AI disappeared.

Lasky looked at the face of wonder on both of his new allies faces, "Roland is the \_Infinity\_'s Smart AI. He's pretty much a giant computer program with the ability to do a thousand things at once."

"Thanks for the explanation, Admiral." Sarah smirked, "But a warning would have been nicer."

Lasky laughed and had Chief escort them back to the hanger bay. They will want to address their crew as soon as possible. Once they were gone, he looked to his two female officer, "Come on, let's get these folks somewhere safe."

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky stood at the head of the bridge with Roland to his right. The bridge was buzzing with the sound of dozens of crewmen getting the last of the prep work done. A few moments later, the noise quieted and Roland sounded, "The deck is ready to jump when you



are, sir."

"Open me a line to Graves. I want to make sure he's ready for his first slipspace jump." He told the AI.

"Aye, sir." The airman pilot disappeared and the view screen changed to the dark red room that served as the \_Birmingham's\_ bridge.

"Vice Admiral Graves, are you ready to jump?" Lasky asked the officer.

"Whenever you are, Admiral Lasky." The dark skinned man nodded.

"Very well." Lasky turned to his crew, "Begin slipspace jump to Refueling Station Delta Fifty-six B."

Several "Aye, sir"'s echoed the room and Lasky watched as the slipspace hole opened in front of their ship. Slowly, the \_Infinity\_ inched inside before getting sucked into the massive vortex. The \_Birmingham\_ was right behind it.

The ship rattled back and forth, more so than usual. Before Lasky could react, the emergency lights begun to blink, "Roland, what the hell is happening?"

"I don't know, sir." Very reassuring when an AI doesn't know something, he thought, "It appears like we are being sucked out of slipspace by \_something\_. I don't know what, though, sir."

"Well, find out." He bellowed but before the AI could disappear. The \_Infinity\_ came out of slipspace. On the view screen, a large terrestrial planet lied ahead with bright blue oceans and white cloud space. Lasky looked at Roland, "Get me a scan of the planet."

"Already did, sir."

"And?"

"I have a massive energy signal coming from one location on the planet." Before he could continue, the blue holographic image of Cortana appeared on a different pedestal. She stared down at the planet.

"Admiral, I might be mistaken but the signal is familiar." She looked up at him, "It's a Forerunner base."

\*\*Thank you for taking the time to read this chapter. There will be many more to come, I can promise that.\*\*

\*\*Don't forget to give me some feedback.\*\*

#### 4. Chapter 4: The Forerunner Tower

\*\*This next chapter will bring the Star Wars characters into the Halo Universe, some old enemies, and introduce my first original character.\*\*

\*\*I really hope you guys like this chapter and will continue to read on. Thank you so much for the support and don't forget to review at the end.\*\*

\*\*I do not own anything from the stories but I do own any original content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Four: The Forerunner Tower\*\*

\*\*On the Main Bridge \*\*

\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_

\*\*Over an unknown Forerunner planet\*\*

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

"It's a Forerunner base." Cortana said, the words rolling off her holographic tongue with fear. She looked up at Lasky, whose face was made of stone, "What are your orders, sir?"

"Get me Graves." He mumbled and Cortana nodded.

The Vice Admiral's image appeared on the screen, "Admiral Lasky, this doesn't look like a refueling depot."

"It's not. We were pulled out of slipspace by something on the planet. I don't know what it was but we are detecting a familiar massive energy signal from the planet below." Lasky explained.

"So this is normal?"

"No, not usually, Vice Admiral. It is very hard to find a planet with this kind of signal. We have no choice but to investigate it. This will delay your arrive at the Delta refueling station I mentioned."

"My crew and I understand, Admiral, but I do have one request." Graves said, "I want one of my men to go with your ground team."

"Who do you have in mind?"

\*\*In the Transport hull\*\*

\*\*Of Pelican Callsign \*\*\_\*\*Bearclaw\*\*\_

\*\*Over an unknown Forerunner planet \*\*

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

The Pelican lifted off the group of the hanger bay on board the Birmingham after picking up the single soldier that Graves wished to head down with Chief and the ODS. The soldier was short in stature, maybe five foot six at the most. He wore light weight armor and looked like a micro version of Chief. The only main difference in their armor was the color.

The soldier, classified as a Pilot, wore blue armor with a helmet covering his facial features. He stepped on board the back of the

Pelican and nodded at the crew, "I am Pilot Ian Hawke of the M-COR\_Birmingham\_."

Chief introduced himself and the ODSST gunnery sergeant, Edward Buck. Buck took the time to tell Hawke about his squad as the Pelican lifted off, "You're looking at Romeo, Mickey, Dutch, and Rookie. We're Orbital Drop Shock Troopers and we will be your guide today, Pilot."

"Nice to meet you all." He said, taking a seat as the blast door closed on the Pelican, "I was only given a short briefing on what's going on. What are we looking at?"

Chief unplugged the microchip from the back of his helmet and let Cortana appear over it. She wanted to explain it all to Buck and Hawke, "I picked up a large Forerunner base on the planet's surface. We are to investigate it and the surrounding area for possible reasons why we were pulled from slipspace. Buck, your team will be in charge of surveying the surrounding area but you will be coming with the Chief, Hawke, and I into the base. We don't know what we will find in there so we need to be careful. Clear?"

Buck nodded, "You got it, ma'am."

Cortana retreated back into the chip and Chief slammed her back into his head. The pilot of the Pelican shouted back, "Ten minutes until we break atmosphere. We'll open the hatch door soon."

Chief gave him a thumbs-up and, moments later, the hatch door that they had entered the Pelican through opened, revealing a vast forest-like landscape.

Romeo, dark skinned ODSST sniper, spoke up, "Look's a lot like Earth."

He only said what everyone was thinking, including Hawke. The Pelican zipped through a pair of mountains and the pilot called back, "The signal is coming from the other side of these mountains. We should have a visual inâ€|holy Christ!"

Chief shot his head to the front of the Pelican. He darted for the front, followed by Hawke and Buck. As the Pelican roared into the valley, they spotted the structure. The structure was a large Forerunner tower with four landing pads on different sides of it. Located on the northeastern pad was a strange looking ship that none of them had ever seen before. Chief touched the pilot's shoulder, "Set us down on one of those pads."

"Aye, Chief." The pilot barked.

The Pelican landed like a butterfly on the northwestern pad. The ODSST, Spartan, and Pilot jumped out of the back and Buck starting giving out orders, "Change of plans. Rookie, Dutch, go play in the woods. Romeo, Mickey, see what you can get from that strange ship. If we need you, come running. Got it? Good."

The ODSST raced off to follow their new orders and the trio headed for the other side of the tower. Chief lead the way while Buck and Hawke walked side by side. Each of them had their rifles in their hands. Chief favored his custom Battle Rifle with the detachable scope. Buck

carried a submachine gun with a silencer attached to the muzzle. Hawke was offered a UNSC weapon but he stuck with his Hemlock rifle. The rifle had been with him throughout the Titan Wars and he wasn't letting her go because of some new technology.

They stopped at the southern base of the tower. A large pillar stood between them and the next floor. It was too high to jump up, even for a Spartan, and Buck failed to find any sort of switch, "Now, what?"

Hawke didn't say a word. He decided to let his actions speak for him. He bolted past them and jumped at the side of the wall. He planted his right foot on it and used his jump pack to get to the opposite side. Showing off his jump pack one more time, he used it to somersault himself onto the platform, falling to one knee to keep his balance.

He stood up and looked down below at the Spartan and ODST sergeant. He watched Buck turn to the Chief and Hawke imagine him saying, "Man, I gotta get myself one of those."

Hawke smiled under his helmet and found the switch with no problem. He placed his palm on it and the pillar lowered, making it an elevator. Hawke looked deeper into the base. Part of him wanted to wait for them but curiosity took over. He turned and started walking his way a large metal staircase that spanned the majority of the base. By the time he reached the top, Chief and Buck had just reached the top of the pillar.

A door opened in front of him, revealing another elevator. Hawke took one last look back and entered it. He figured he could ride it to the top and back by the time the others got to the top. He rode the elevator for several minutes until it reached its destination. The doors reopened, revealing a circular room with four viewports looking down on the landing pads below. At the center of the room was a man-sized pillar with an opening in it.

Hawke stepped into the opening and noticed that a large terminal sat before him. He placed his hand on the holographic keyboard and it zapped him. The view screen and all the instruments turned red and he heard the elevator click behind him. He felt the massive arms of Chief pull him away from the terminal, seconds before a large energy beam shot through the ground and up to the ceiling, right where he was just standing.

Hawke's HUD went static, forcing him to rip his helmet off. He noticed that Buck had to do the same. The Chief, on the other hand, didn't have to. Hawke assumed that the girl in his head had saved him from that.

The beam lasted a total of ten seconds before disappearing and everything returned to normal. The only difference was that the terminals didn't return to the light blue that they had been when he arrived. They remained the same red they turned when he had placed his hand on it.

At the center of the pillar, the air seemed to shimmer for a moment, only to be replaced by a floating creature. The being had the height of a person but hovered a few inches off the ground. It had orange padding all over its body and carried a strange looking weapon in its

hands.

It gave off a loud scream and started to fire. Chief jumped into between it and his teammates. He activated a hardlight shield that protected the front of his body. The orange projectiles bounced off it, causing the blue energy shield to shift to a purple color, "Get to the elevator!"

Several more of the things appeared throughout the room as Buck and Hawke bolted for the elevator doors. Chief covered them with the shield, popping some shots from his magnum as well. The doors slid open and the three of them got inside. Buck slammed his fist against the controls and doors closed.

Buck grabbed Hawke by the chinks his armor, "What the hell were you thinking?"

"I'm sorry but I didn't know something like that was going to happen." Hawke yelled back, "I placed my hand on it and that happened. Nothing else."

Buck's hand clenched into a fist but the Chief stopped him, "He's telling the truth. Call Lasky, Sergeant."

Buck nodded and let go of Hawke. He pulled his helmet back over his black haired head and said into the speaker, "This Gunnery Sergeant Buck to \_Infinity\_, is everything okay up there?"

"Whatever you guys did, it knocked down our shields to zero." Lasky's voice came through, "What the hell just happened?"

"Our Pilot friend touched something he shouldn't have and it caused the entire tower to go crazy. We had an encounter with some Promethean Knights so we had to retreat back down the tower." Buck responded.

"Roger that, Sergeant." Lasky said, "Keep me posted."

"Ah, Chief," Cortana spoke through the interference, "I'm picking up a massive energy signal coming through the tower."

"Hostile?" he asked.

"I don't think so. It's only on the systems attached to the southern pads." She said.

"Squad, stay away from the southern side of the tower." Buck yelled into his helmet's comm system.

"Can do, Sarge" Romeo's voice called back, "Besides, we're a little busy dealing with some Prometheans down here."

"I think something is coming through." Was all Cortana had to say.

**\*\*On an unknown planet\*\***

**\*\*In a galaxy far, far away SWU\*\***

"Luke, you know I would do just about anything for you," Han said,

"but to be a part of a lab experiment? I don't know."

"I wouldn't ask if I didn't think it was important, Han, and I can't do this alone. I need your help, all of your help." Luke explained.

Han looked at Kyle but he only shrugged, "The Raven's Claw is going, too."

He turned to Leia and took a deep breath, "It's your call, Princess. Technically, the Falcon is under your command."

She smiled like she loved hearing him say that. She turned and looked at Luke, "Knowing you, you must already have a plan."

Luke nodded and looked at Kyle, "Bring in your students."

Kyle nodded and walked away with his comm link in hand. Seconds later, a pair of doors opened up from off of the room and two young men entered the room. One of them was a blond haired man with light chin stubble. He wore a tan Jedi robe with a lightsaber attached to the belt. The second had dark red hair and wore orange clothing that Han remembering seeing on some young Coruscant kids. He also had a lightsaber on his hip.

Kyle pointed to the blonde, "Jaden Korr," then at the red haired man, "Rosh Penn, meet General Han Solo, Senator Leia Organa Solo, Chewbacca, and Threepio."

Rosh was the first to speak, "General Solo, it is an honor to meet you."

"Thanks, kid." Was all he responded.

Luke stepped forward, "Jaden, Kyle, Artoo and I will go in the Raven's Claw while you guys take the Falcon. Rosh is going to stay behind and activate the tower for us. He will also be linked up in a similar fashion to how I am linked to my X-wing and will guard this tower."

"It's a boring job," The Padawan learner said, "but someone has to do it."

"We're leaving our fate in the hands of a kid?" Han asked.

Kyle butted in, "Rosh has shown great skill with the Force and I do recall a young kid, younger than Rosh, saved the galaxy and brought balance to the Force. I think he can handle a little teleportation."

"Right," Han wasn't too convinced but he decided to drop the subject, "Leia, this is your call."

"Luke, we got your back on this one." She smiled at her brother.

Luke returned the smile, "Then, it is settled. Let's go get ready."

Two hours later, they found themselves in their respected ships. Han

sat in the cockpit of the \_Falcon\_ and radioed up to Rosh, "The \_Millennium Falcon\_ is ready for, uh, launch."

"So is the \_Raven's Claw\_." Kyle added.

"Alright," Rosh answered, "activating the tower now. Here goes nothing."

Han had gone through hyperspace billions of times but never had he gone through hyperspace while docked on a planet. The scene around them smeared the way the stars do when shooting through hyperspace until it was nothing but darkness. He had to close his eyes to stop himself from getting sick. When he opened them, it only made it more confusing.

The ship stopped and Han could swear it had never moved. They were staring at the same tower that they had just attempted to leave. He looked to the left of the cockpit and noticed the \_Raven's Claw\_ was there as well, "What the hell? Luke, your teleporter didn't work."

"What are you talking about, Han? Can't you feel it?" was his answer through the comm link.

Han looked back at Leia, whose face was blank. She looked at him, "Han, we're not at the same tower."

"What are you talking about?" he said.

"If we were at the same tower, Han, why is Luke's X-wing right there?" She pointed to the right side of the cockpit and Han saw for the first time what she meant.

Docked on the landing pad was the very X-wing that Luke claimed to have been teleported. Han couldn't believe his eyes and was trying to think of a way to counter Leia's question when Kyle came over the comm, "And to our left you will see a strange ship with two armored men fighting off some strange looking beings."

Han looked at Chewy, "Remember what I said about my bad feelings?"

The Wookie growled in agreement.

**\*\*At a Forerunner Tower\*\***

**\*\*On an unknown Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

The elevator stopped at the bottom floor and they prepared themselves. Chief knew that the room was going to be full of targets so they had to be ready. He nodded at Buck and he pressed the door controls. The door separated, opening up to the massive staircase they had to climb before.

Along the pillars to the sides of the staircase, more Promethean Knights appeared with some smaller Crawlers. Chief activated his shield again, giving Buck and Hawke enough cover to dive behind some metal pillars. Chief joined Hawke on the right side while Buck took

to the left. Chief grabbed his Battle Rifle off his back and took aim.

His first shot hit one of the Crawlers in mid-jump. The bullet slammed into the side of its head, causing it to self-destruct. His next shot was at one of the Knights' Watchers. The Watchers hovered over the battle and healed their Knights. He wasn't going to let that happen.

The shot turned the Watcher into a dozen pieces, "Buck, focus your fire on the Watchers! Hawke, keep your aim on those Crawlers. Don't let them get close. They will tear you to shreds."

"What are you going to do?" Hawke asked the Spartan. Chief answered him with action. Chief shouldered his rifle and switched to his magnum pistol. He grabbed Hawke's Smart Pistol out of the holster without saying a word. Before he could react, Chief was gone.

Chief dashed out of cover and jumped onto one of the pillars. He fired two shots from his magnum into the first Knight and followed with another from Hawke's pistol. To Chief's surprise, the pistol locked onto the target like it was about to fire a rocket at it and found its mark with ease. The Knight exploded into a massive date purge.

Chief jumped to the next pillar and used the Smart Pistol to lock on from a distance, firing his magnum to keep the Knight from firing. He heard the sound of a Crawler jumping at him but it was shot out of the air by Hawke. Once he was close enough, he fired the Smart Pistol and three bullets dug into the Knight, destroying it.

Chief looked and quickly counted six more Knights, ten Crawlers, and three Watchers. On his HUD visor, Cortana's textual words popped up and said, "Cake walk."

Chief smiled from under his helmet and headed to the next Knight. He was really enjoying the Smart Pistol. Cortana managed to link herself to it, allowing for more accurate locking. He didn't even have to try and aim at a nearby Knight. He just pointed his pistol in its direction and Cortana did the rest. All he had to do was pull the trigger and three or four shots flew out.

He jumped in between two of them and pointed the Smart Pistol at the one on his left and his magnum at the one on the right. He unleashed three shots from each into the Knights' faces, sending them falling backwards and erupting into a molten mess.

He stopped and realized that he was now at the bottom of the staircase. He looked back to see a Crawler making a final jump at him. He dropped his magnum to the ground and caught the monster out of the air with his now free hand. He looked it directly in the eyes as he squeezed the AI life out of it.

He dropped the destroyed robot to the ground and noticed that Hawke and Buck had followed him the whole way. He looked at Hawke and pointed at the Crawler, "You missed one."

"Well, you looked like you were enjoying yourself. Can I have my pistol back?" he responded and Chief tossed it to him. He retrieved his own magnum off the ground and didn't even bother using the



elevator. He just dropped down, allowing his suit to absorb the fall.

**\*\*Outside the an unknown tower\*\***

**\*\*On an unknown planet\*\***

**\*\*In an unknown galaxy HU\*\***

None of them could react fast enough. Han bolted for the ramp and made as it hit the ground. He didn't know who the armored men were but he didn't like the sight of the creatures they were shooting. Besides, he thought, they look like they need a hand.

Blaster in hand, the smuggler dashed to cover along the tower's wall. He looked back to see that Chewy was directly behind him, bowcaster in hand. Leia and Threepio stayed by the Falcon and that made him happy. He didn't want her getting hurt in all the action.

Out of the Raven's Claw, the Jedi poured out with their lightsabers drawn. They charged at the wampa rat-like creatures and started hacking away. This gave the armored men a chance to get to some cover.

Han popped around the corner and took some shots at the creatures. His laser shots found a mark in the form of one of their heads. The thing exploded into dozens of pieces.

"Mickey," one of the men yelled, "Crawler on your left."

"I see it." The armored man with the red breast plate turned to his left side and fired several shots into an advancing Crawler. The thing met the same fate as the one that Han fired at.

Han and Chewy ran to the men's cover. The one with the purple breast plate looked them up and down from behind a black visor, "Who the hell are you guys?"

"We're the guys saving your asses." Han remarked, "Names?"

"Romeo." The purple one answered, "This is Mickey."

"Got it." He pointed at himself, "Han and this is Chewbacca. Don't mind the fur."

The Wookiee gave off a low growl.

Mickey couldn't keep his eyes off the Wookiee. Han was always surprised by that. Three Jedi were meters away with lightsabers and the Force and people still liked to stare at his hairy friend.

Han looked over at Luke. The Jedi Grand Master did a somersault over one of the Crawlers, turned around, and drove his blade into the back of the creature. Kyle and Jaden stood back to back with their blades in a defense stance. The Crawlers shot bullets at them but they were only absorbed by the energy blades.

Kyle pushed his left hand out and three of the Crawlers hovered in the air. With a clench of his fist, they slammed into each other and into a massive explosion. Jaden threw his lightsaber at the side of

trio and used the Force to slice it through each of them.

It was starting to become an onslaught and Han wasn't even doing anything. He found himself mesmerized by the Jedi. He shook it off but it was too late. The battle was over before he realized it.

They all grouped together, including Leia, Threepio, and Artoo, at the base of the tower. They turned to see three other armored figures jumping down from the second floor. They approached them and stopped.

Leia jumped forward, "I am Senator Leia Organa Solo of the New Republic House of Representatives. These are my allies and friends, General Han Solo, Chewbacca, Jedi Grand Master Luke Skywalker, Jedi Master Kyle Katarn, Padawan Jaden Korr, Threepio, and Artoo."

Chief went to speak but Buck interrupted him with a call to his helmet, "Go ahead, sir. Buck here."

"I need you report back to the Infinity, now." Lasky yelled, "There's something coming for us and it is huge."

"Sir, we have encountered a group of strangers" Buck started.

"Then, bring them with you." Lasky barked, "We're making friends all over. Lasky out."

"What's going on?" asked Leia.

Buck looked at them and said, "I don't want to find out. We need to get out of here. Now."

**\*\*Thank for reading and the next chapter will be up soon.\*\***

## 5. Chapter 5: More New Friends

**\*\*I do have to say that I am really enjoying writing this story. I always wondered what would happen if all these people met and it's really interesting to think about.\*\***

**\*\*Well, here's the next chapter and I hope you enjoy it\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Five: More New Friends\*\***

**\*\*In the Combat Information Center, Deck One\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV Normandy\*\***

**\*\*At the Mu Relay\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

The Normandy shuttered to a slow movement as it came into the Mu Relay's sector. Commander Shepherd stood at the top of the CIC, overlooking the view map in front of him. He kept his hands behind

his back and his face blank.

Around the CIC, he had called up his crew. Over the past few months he had been chasing Saren, he managed to make some new friends along the way. To his right was the former C-Sec officer Garrus Vakarian. Garrus was a member of a race known as the turians. Turians are a reptile-bird hybrid and have one of the strongest military fleets in the galaxy.

Next to Garrus was the behemoth known as Urdnot Wrex. Shepherd met Wrex on the Citadel where he was working as a bounty hunter. Their missions intercepted each other and a partnership was made. The krogan battlemaster joined the Normandy on its chase. Back on Virmire, he and Shepherd had gone toe to toe over the idea of blowing up a base full of his kind. Thanks to Shepherd's silver tongue, they avoided bloodshed.

To Shepherd left was Lieutenant Kaidan Alenko. Kaidan and Shepherd had known each other for years but, over the past few months, they had grown incredible close. He was also a very good friend of the late Ashley Williams and Shepherd knew that he wanted to see Saren's ass dead more than anyone on board.

Next to Kaidan, the asari professor, Dr. Liara T'soni, stood. Her light blue skinned seemed to shine brighter in her white battle armor. She had changed a lot since she watched her mother, Matriarch Benezia, die in her arm. While she was still the kind hearted woman he met in that Prothean ruin, she was combat ready and wanted Saren dead almost as much as Kaidan.

Last but not least, Tali'Zorah nar Rayya stood in her Quarian environmental suit. Since Quarrians were pushed from their homeworld by their own geth, they were forced to live on board massive ships. Centuries of processed air forced them to have to wear environmental suits at all times. Tali claims if she removes any part of her suit or it gets damaged, she could get extremely sick and die. He couldn't risk that.

"Alright, Joker, take us in." Shepherd said to the helmsman in the cockpit.

"Ah, Shepherd, you should see this." He responded and the holographic image of the galaxy changed to that of the Mu Relay. Expecting it to be vacant, Shepherd was surprised to see a massive ship orbiting the Relay. He commanded Joker to zoom in on it and his worst fears were confirmed.

From front to back, the ship was two kilometers long with seven arm-like sprouts coming out the front. To Shepherd, it reminded him of a giant squid with the power to destroy millions of lives. It was something that he had to stop. However, the ship wasn't alone. He could count about twenty geth capital ships along with support ships. It was an entire fleet. He whispered, "Saren."

Shepherd learned on Virmire that the ship was no ship at all. It was a living machine hell bent on destroying the galaxy and there were thousands just like it. It had called itself Sovereign and the Protheans had called it a Reaper. Shepherd let out a breath that he had been holding the whole time, "Have they seen us?"

"Not yet, Commander, but they are about to make the jump through the Relay." Joker explained, "Orders?"

"Follow them through. That bastard isn't getting away again." He said, "All men to battle stations!"

The CIC came to life as everyone on it sprang into action. Shepherd stayed where he was and watched the massive ship jump through the Relay, "Joker, do it."

He felt the \_Normandy\_'s element zero engine drive kick in and zip through the space in between them and the Relay. Without hesitation, they shot through it and followed the Reaper and geth ships. The ship rattled back and forth as it accelerated with the help of the Relay.

That was when things went bad.

A large energy beam hit the ship, causing most of the deck crew to fall to the floor. Shepherd regained his footing, "Joker, what the hell?"

"I don't know, sir." He yelled back, "I got major ship failures coming from all over the ship. Whatever just hit us, it hit us hard. We're slowing down."

"But we're in a Relay jump. We can't just stop." Shepherd responded.

"Well, tell the \_Normandy\_ that, sir."

Shepherd cursed under his breath and was able to order the crew to abandon ship when it stopped. Everything stopped. The entire ship stopped dead in space.

Shepherd looked around and noticed that everyone was okay for the most part. Some bumps and bruises but nothing Dr. Chakwas couldn't patch up. He was about to call Joker but the helmsman beat him to it, "Commander, you might want to come see this."

Confusion brushed over his face as he pushed past the crew and into the cockpit, "Joker, whatâ€¦|woahâ€¦|"

He never finished that statement. The sight of the massive ship before them took the words right from his mouth. It was the first time Shepherd had been speechless since Eden Prime, which felt like so long ago. He couldn't tear his eyes away from the giant ship that sat in its path.

The ship made Sovereign look like a baby. Shepherd couldn't tell how big it really was but he was guessing that it was about six kilometers long, three kilometers longer than Sovereign. He managed to tear his stare from the ship and down at his pilot, "I really hope she's friendly."

"If she's not, we won't have to worry about it for too long." Joker stated, "Do you see the size of those cannons. We'll be horse paste from half of a shot."

"Can you raise their comms?"

"I'm trying and so are they."

"Are you sure?"

"Positive."

Shepherd keyed his orange omni-tool's comm link to the Engineering deck, "Adams, is everything alright down there?"

"A few bruises, sir, but we're fine down here."

"We are trying to make contact with a nearby ship. Is there anything you can do with the comms to get them?" Shepherd asked.

Instead of Engineer Adams answering, the tiny spark-plug voice of Tali came through, "Shepherd, I raced down here as soon as I could. I can enhance the communications array but I will have to crawl deeper into the \_Normandy\_."

"Is it safe?"

"Not for humans but my suit will protect me well enough." She said.

Shepherd paused for a moment before answering, "Do it before that ship fires on us."

Minutes ticked by of complete silence. Shepherd kept his stare on the ship in front of them. He was trying to figure out where it had come from. It wasn't from anything he had ever seen before so it couldn't be turian or salarian.

Joker snapped him back to reality, "Shepherd, I did a scan of the ship. Her shields are down and it seems to be towing another ship. That ship is about a kilometer and a half long."

"Her shields are down? Combat?"

"I don't think so. Scans show that they were shot down pretty recently but there are no signs of battle. The only problem with the second ship is that it is out of fuel." Joker explained.

Shepherd rubbed his chin stubble. Before he could say another word, static came over the ship's comms, "Joker, clean that up."

"Thisâ€¦Laskyâ€¦\_Infinity\_â€¦respond." The voice came through as Joker rushed to clear it up, "I say, again, this is Admiral Lasky of theâ€¦\_Infinity\_â€¦respond."

Shepherd keyed his own comms, "This Commander Shepherd of the SSV \_Normandy\_ of the Earth System Alliance."

"Earth System Alliance?" the voice was coming through a lot clearer now. Whatever Tali did had worked perfectly.

"Yes, Admiral, are you a part of it?"

"Negative, Commander." Lasky answered, "I am of the United Nations

Space Command, UNSC, of Earth."

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unknown Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"I am of the United Nations Space Command, UNSC, of Earth." He said, shaking his head. How many first encounters are we going to have, he asked to himself, "Do you come in peace?"

"We do, Admiral." Shepherd answered, "Permission to come aboard for repairs."

"Permission granted. Lasky out." He turned to his crew, "Direct this \_Normandy\_ to Hanger Bay 17 B. I will meet them there. Tell Graves, Dare, and Palmer to meet me there as well."

One of the crew members got to work with his requests as he made his way for the elevator. He took it down the several decks he needed and was greeted by Dare in the hallway, "Admiral."

"At ease, Captain. Walk with me." He said and the ONI officer fell into step with him, "There has been in a situation. Another ship from another universe just entered our system."

"Another one, sir?" she questioned.

He nodded, "This one claims to be from Earth, just like the Militia. He says he is part of something called the Earth System Alliance. This Alliance doesn't come up in any of the Militia's files. I'm sure Roland and Cortana would agree that the only 'logical' explanation is that they are from another universe, just like Graves and his crew."

If the news surprised Dare, she didn't show it. Her blonde ponytail just bounced back and forth as she took the news, "Another thing else, sir?"

"Not that I know of, Captain." The doors slid aside and they were greeted by Palmer and Graves in the hanger bay.

"Admiral Lasky, Captain Dare," Graves nodded, "Do you care to explain to me what is going on?"

And Lasky did. He told him about the \_Normandy\_ and how it was landing in their hanger bay. He told him about his theory on that it might be from another universe, just like Graves. Just like Dare, if Graves was surprised, he didn't show it.

One of the hanger crewmen waved that the ship was about to enter and the four of them turned. The ship was about the size of four Pelicans and had a bird like shape to it. It had four engine coils on the back with a tail fin sticking out the top. It slowed to a stop and landed on the metal surface of the hanger. The metal ramp dropped down from the side and the airlock opened.

Lasky had them form a line about five meters from the ramp. Graves and himself stood in the middle with Palmer on his right and Dare on Graves's left. They stood for two minutes while the \_Normandy\_'s crew descended down the ramp.

Dressed in dark Dress Blues, three human men stopped at about meter from Lasky's line. From left to right, the first man was clean shaven with a short military-style haircut. He kept his back straight and the single gold bar of a lieutenant on both his shoulders. The middle man had his blonde hair slicked back and out of his face. He had light chin stubble but it looked well kept. His icy blue eyes had the look of an angel while his facial scar on his left cheek showed that he was no saint. Next to him was a shorter bald man with a light bearded chin strap that went from his ears and down to his chin.

The center man saluted and the other two followed suit, "I am Commander John Shepherd of the SSV \_Normandy\_, member of the Earth System Alliance and Special Tactics and Reconnaissance. To my right is Lieutenant Kaiden Alenko of the Earth System Alliance and, to my left, is Navigator Charles Pressly of the Earth System Alliance and my executive officer. Thank you for allowing us to board your ship, Admiral."

"The pleasure is all mine, Commander." Admiral Lasky stated. He did his own introductions, "To my right is Commander Sarah Palmer, leader of the Spartan operations. To my left is Vice Admiral Marcus Graves of the M-COR \_Birmingham\_, the ship in our tow, and, to his left, is Captain Veronica Dare of the Office of Naval Intelligence."

"It is a pleasure to meet all of you." Shepherd stated, "I do have to warn you, however. Some of my crew members are not all like, uh, us."

"How so?" Lasky asked.

"I will be blunt. Some of my crew are 'aliens'."

Lasky frowned, "Are they hostile?"

Shepherd smirked, "Only if you piss them off. I ordered them to stay on board the ship until further notice. I don't want there to be any problems until we figure out what is going on."

"Understandable." Lasky said. "Now, let's head to the conference room and we will discuss everything there."

The seven of them crowded into the elevator and headed for the meeting room that they had first talked to Vice Admiral Graves in. Lasky sat at the head of the table with Dare and Palmer to his right and left, respectfully. Graves sat in the middle of the table, next to Palmer. Shepherd took a seat at the head, opposite Lasky, with Alenko to his right and Pressly to his left.

"So, Commander, you should probably start." Lasky stated.

Shepherd nodded and started to go into his Earth's history. To both Lasky and Graves surprise, it was exactly the same as their own, until he got to space travel, "In 2148, while investigating the planet Mars, we found a large alien base there. Inside these archives, we learned about an ancient alien race that disappeared

50,000 years ago and how they used these things call Mass Effect Relays to travel the galaxy. Upon finding one of these Relays, humanity found that we were not alone in the galaxy. Over the next several decades, humanity would gain an embassy on the Citadel and controlled a sizable portion of the galaxy."

Shepherd let that sink in before continuing, "That leads to my mission. A few months ago, my ship and I were sent to a colony on Eden Prime to pick up a Prothean beacon. A Special Tactics and Recon member backstabbed us and attacked the colony. After fighting through an army of geth forces, we reached the beacon. I'm sorry, Admiral, but I would like to keep from telling you what I saw when I activated the beacon."

"How come, Commander?"

"It isn't classified or anything. I just don't like talking about it." He responded, "To sum it up, I saw the massive extinction of the Protheans right before my eyes. The beacon was destroyed and we returned to the Citadel. The Citadel Council made me the first human Spectre and sent me to chase down Saren, the rouge Spectre that attacked Eden Prime. We almost had him and his ship before getting hit by an energy beam. We were thrown from the Relay jump and landed here."

Lasky was quiet for a moment. He opened his mouth to speak but was stopped by the sudden interruption of Roland appearing on the table, "Admiral, you have to see this?"

"Is that an AI?" Alenko blurted out.

Lasky ignored him, "Roland, this better be important."

"Is a ship entering the system while our shields are still down important?" he responded.

"What? Do we have visual?" Dare demanded.

Roland turned into a massive ship with long tentacles surrounded by smaller, bug-like ships. Lasky was at a loss for words and Shepherd found them, "Admiral Lasky, that is Saren's flagship, Sovereign. There is something else you need to know about his ship. It's alive."

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"Remember what I told you about the Protheans? How they disappeared 50,000 years ago?" he explained, "Well, that was the thing that caused them to disappear. That and thousands just like it."

Lasky cursed under his breath, "Roland, get me Buck, now."

"Go ahead, sir." Buck's voice came through the table's intercom system, "Buck here."

"I need you to report back to the Infinity, now." Lasky yelled, "There's something coming for us and it is huge."

"Sir, we have encountered a group of strangers" Buck started.



"Then, bring them with you." Lasky barked, "We're making friends all over. Lasky out."

Lasky turned to Dare, "Get to the deck and tell them to launch as soon as the ground team is inside. Graves, tell your ship to be ready for a slipspace jump and pray that it goes better than last time. Commander, you might want to return to your ship. We will discuss everything further once we are away from that 'thing'."

They skipped the formalities. They raced off to do what they had to do. Lasky just sat in his seat and tried to wrap his head around everything. First, Graves and his crew appeared out of nowhere. Next, Shepherd and his crew and, according to Buck, they should be expecting a third group to enter into all this. Lasky had seen some crazy stuff before in his life but nothing quite like this.

Roland appeared on the table, "Sir, ground crew is in along with three new ships. The Birmingham is ready to launch, sir. The bridge is awaiting your orders."

He looked up at the orange AI and his WWII jacket, "Do it."

"Destination, sir?"

"Earth."

\*\*Thank you so much reading and I hope that you will give me some feedback.\*\*

## 6. Chapter 6: Chi Ceti IV

\*\*I made this chapter extra-long to include some interaction between all the forces, an interesting combat section, and introduction of some more familiar characters.\*\*

\*\*Please review and enjoy.\*\*

\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Six: Chi Ceti IV\*\*

\*\*In the Meeting Room\*\*

\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_

\*\*On a slipspace route to Earth\*\*

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

As Lasky looked around the room, he only thought of one thing: they are going to need a bigger meeting room. He had sent Commander Palmer to check in on Chief and Buck and told Captain Dare to keep an eye on the main bridge to make room for all the new representatives.

To avoid overcrowding the small meeting room, Lasky asked all the parties to bring only two representatives. Lasky and Cortana would be

for the UNSC since Cortana didn't take up any room at all. Commander Shepherd and Navigator Pressly came from the \_Normandy\_. Graves and Sarah came from the \_Birmingham\_. Lastly, the newcomers that Chief and Buck had met on the Forerunner planet came to introduce themselves.

"I am Senator Leia Organa Solo of the New Republic House of Representatives." She said. She wore a long white gown and wore her brown hair up into two perfect buns on the sides of her head. She pointed to the brown robed blond next to her, "This is my twin brother, Jedi Grand Master Luke Skywalker."

Everyone took turns introducing themselves to the newcomers and Lasky asked them to give them a little background. He was expecting something along the lines of the histories that the other two parties had shared but he was surprised on how different they were. She explained how they are from a galaxy far, far away and that they were teleported here by a Forerunner tower, identical to the one that they had first met at.

"So it is possible that you are from the same universe as us." Cortana stated.

Luke nodded, "I believe so. I believe that those towers are connected somehow. They must act like some sort of bridge in between our galaxy and yours."

"Is it possible you are from one of our universes?" asked Shepherd.

Both Cortana and Luke shook their heads. The Jedi Grand Master allowed the AI to explain it, "If these towers are bridges, it would make the most sense that they are linked in the same universe. However, the M-COR Pilot Ian Hawke did cause a massive energy beam to shoot out of the tower. I judged the readings and matched them up with the readings your ship took during your Relay jump."

"What did you find out?" the commander asked.

"They were the same."

That caught Graves's attention, "So this bridge can shoot through universes."

"In theory, yes." Cortana stated.

"But we can't test anything since it is, now, under enemy control." Lasky pointed out. He looked at Shepherd, "Your buddy, Saren, wouldn't let something like that out of his hands. He will have his forces take control of the entire planet until he figures out how to use the bridge. That places all our universes in danger."

"He will probably want to use it to bring the Reapers into this universe." Shepherd claimed, "He might not even know that he is in a different universe."

"That's a possibility." Lasky stated, "If these Reapers are as dangerous as you claim, Shepherd, than I don't want that to happen."

They all nodded in agreement. Lasky stood up, "We will be arriving at Earth in two hours. We should all probably get some sleep. Admiral Hood is going to crap his white pants when he reads my report. Until then, have your crews intermix with mine. I want them to know who is all on this ship. Shepherd, since you have the most diverse crew, please forward information on them to Roland so he can spread it out among the crew before we have some problems. Same goes for your 'Wookie' friend, Senator Organa Solo. Until next time."

Lasky and the others headed out of the meeting room and to their respected ships and areas. He was looking forward to getting some shut eye until his comm link clicked on, "Lasky."

"Admiral, it's Palmer. Can you meet me in the armory?" her voice called through.

"On my way." He took the elevator down to the armory level. The armory was the largest out of any other UNSC ship. Taking up an entire deck, the armory was split into three sections. Small arms, large arms, and armor. Having four units of Spartans on board, he needed a lot space for armor. He found Palmer in the large arms section in between a rack of Scorpion tank missiles and Hornet ammo crates. She saluted when he approached, "Admiral."

"At ease, Commander." He said, "What's going on, Sarah?"

"I'm guessing you haven't read Cortana's report from the Forerunner planet?" she said, beckon him to follow. He found Chief, Buck, Mickey, and Romeo sitting on some ammo crates labeled Grenades.

"Not yet, why?" he looked at Buck. He looked like he wanted to punch a hole through the Grenades crate and blow everything sky high, "Sergeant, where's the rest of your team?"

Chief stood up and looked at Palmer, "May I?"

"Please, Chief."

"ODST Rookie and Dutch are still on the Forerunner world, sir." He said.

"What?" Lasky didn't recall giving that order, "Why?"

"They were deep in the forest when you called, sir." Buck stood up, "If we waited, the enemy would have been on us. They volunteered to stay behind, sir."

"Chief," he looked at the Spartan, "full report. Now."

Chief nodded, "After we got the call, we radioed to Dutch and ordered him back. The Pelican pilot claimed they were too far and it would take too long to pick them up. There was silence over the radio for several moments until Dutch spoke again. He asked to remain on the planet for observational and reconnaissance purposes. Gunnery Sergeant Buck protested but Dutch and Rookie's choice was made. The Jedi newcomers spoke quietly and the young one, Jaden Korr, raced off into the forest. He radioed to us as we returned to the Infinity that he had met up with Dutch and Rookie and the three of them were going to keep an eye on the enemy. End of report, sir."

Lasky calmed his temper, "You guys made the right choice. If these Jedi are as good as Cortana's research claims and if Dutch and Rookie's ODST training is as good as the others, then they will be fine. Besides, we might have to assault that planet and having someone on the ground will give us an advantage. Any news on radio contact with them?"

"For that," Buck folded his arms, "you will have to ask the Jedi about that."

"Chief, explain."

"Apparently, these Jedi have ways of communication that we never heard of. The Master Jedi, Katarn, claimed that he could speak with his apprentice without the use of technology. We didn't have time for him to explain more." Chief told him.

"Just great. I'll talk to Katarn when we reach Earth. I need sleep. All of us need sleep. Go to bed. That's an order." Lasky said as he turned and headed for the elevator.

**\*\*On the Cairo Station\*\***

**\*\*Orbiting Earth\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"Lord Hood, we might have a problem." A young man yelled up to the bald man that was overlooking the deck.

"What's going on?" he asked.

"The Chi Ceti IV transponder just went dark. They were attempting to send out a message to Earth. I'll pull it up on main screen." He responded.

"Do it" Hood turned to look at the large video screen in front of him and his jaw dropped.

The screen showed a young man, dressed in UNSC armor, bent over a desk. He was looking directly at the camera, "This is Private Robert Kyle of UNSC base on Chi Ceti IV to Cairo Station of Earth, and we are under attack by an unknown force. Please, send backup. I say again, we are under attack and need reinforcements."

He looked like he wanted to say more but a door slide open behind him and Hood got his first glimpse at the enemy. It looked to be man-sized and stood on two legs. It looked like a person up to its shoulders. Where a human head should have been was a large light source. To Hood, it looked like a giant flashlight sticking out of its head. Kyle turned to shot but was dead before he got a shot off. The creature ended it all by shooting a projectile based weapon right at the screen, causing most of the Cairo Station's crew to jump.

He had the crew stop the footage on the creature, "What the hell is that thing?"

"I don't know, sir." Answered the man that found the video, "It doesn't look like anything the Covenant would create. It kinda lacks that purple and pink color."

Before he could give an order, the man stopped him again, "Sir, I got two ships coming through slipspace. One is an unknown."

"The other?"

"It's the \_Infinity\_, sir."

"Lasky? He should be out in deep space looking for Forerunner tech." Hood almost whispered. A purple wormhole appeared in the distance and he watched as the massive ship appeared with another smaller ship in tow, "Hail them."

"They're already hailing us, sir."

"Patch it through to my private room."

Hood turned and left the main deck and headed for the side office that had sealed for his own use. He activated the small terminal, "This is Fleet Admiral Sir Terrence Hood of Cairo Station to UNSC \_Infinity\_, do you respond?"

The screen flashed to a video of Admiral Thomas Lasky's face, "Lord Hood, it's Admiral Lasky. I have something you're going to want to hear. Just bear with me and I promise it will all make sense in the end."

**\*\*In the largest Meeting Room\*\***

**\*\*On Cairo Station\*\***

**\*\*Orbiting Earth\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Lord Hood stopped the video on the robotic creature. He had played the video for Lasky and his new allies. In the room were Hood, Lasky, Dare, Shepherd, Skywalker, and Graves. They all looked confused. All them but Shepherd. He just slammed his fist on the metal table, "Saren."

"I thought you said that Saren was turian like your sniper?" Lasky questioned.

"He is but that is one of his geth." He told them, "Admiral Hood, your colony was attacked by Saren and his geth. I need to go after them."

Hood crossed his arms and looked at Lasky, "What do you think, Tom?"

"Sir, all oddities aside, this is an act of war." Lasky stated and Hood nodded.

Shepherd spoke up, "If Saren is attacking your planets, that means he is looking for something. I spent the last six months following him around my galaxy. If there is one thing I learned, he doesn't show himself without reason. There was something on Chi Ceti IV that he wanted and it has something to do with the FIB."

The started to call the tower on the Forerunner planet the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge, or FIB, for short. They all knew that the FIB was their only way home and it was damaged. Saren might be trying to find a way to fix it so he can use it to return to his own universe.

"Lasky, I don't have many ships to spare." Hood told Lasky

"Sir, with our new allies, I have plenty of ships and men for a rescue op." Lasky stated.

"Also, Vice Admiral Graves, the Birmingham is refueled and refitted but there is one problem. I can't just put our technology into her since she isn't an UNSC ship." Hood explained.

Graves was silent for a moment before answering, "The only way for you to upgrade her is if it joins the UNSC."

"Exactly." Hood said, "Once you can go home, we can remove the upgrades and return it to the Militia but, in the meantime"

"I understand, Fleet Admiral." Graves interrupted, "The ship is yours but my only request is that it remains a part of Lasky's fleet."

"As long as that is okay with Lasky." Hood stated.

"I never turn away ships, Lord Hood."

"Very well." The Fleet Admiral stated, "Tom, there is something you should know about Chi Ceti IV. Since the beginning of the Human-Covenant War, it was used as a top secret research site for testing weaponry. In fact, a lot of the gear you will find on your ship was designed there, including the Spartans' MJONIR power suits. A month ago, the base got a new crew member."

Lasky didn't have to let him finish. He knew who he meant and it was all starting to make sense to him, "That's why Saren and his geth attacked Chi Ceti IV. They're trying to get to Halsey."

"Who else could fix a bridge created by the Forerunners? I don't know how he got this information but I do know one thing. They can't get to Halsey."

"They won't, sir." Lasky promised.

"Very well. If everything is in order, you are all dismissed. God's speed, Admiral." Lord Hood stated and saluted.

**\*\*In the Transport hull\*\***

**\*\*Of Pelican Callsign \*\*\_\*\*Bearclaw\*\*\_\*\***

**\*\*Over Chi Ceti IV\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"LZ is ahead!" the Pelican pilot hollered back, "ETA five minutes."

Chief unplugged Cortana from his head and had her appear over the

small microchip, "Alright, we know the plan. The UNSC base here will be heavily fortified by geth troops so we have to be quiet. A UNSC task force is already overseeing the base and we will meet up with them there. Once in the base, we need to find a computer terminal so Tali and I can start trying to find Halsey. Understood?"

Chief looked around at his crew. There were only four of them in the back of the Pelican. Pilot Hawke kept his back straight and his rifle in his lap. The quarian from the \_Normandy\_, who introduced herself as Tali'Zorah, kept staring at Cortana like she was trying to figure out who she worked. Chief couldn't see anything else behind her purple helmet visor. The final member of his team was Jedi Master Katarn. He dressed himself in a black robe-like outfit and carried his lightsaber on his one hip, blaster on the other.

The Pelican touched down in a small clearing and Cortana went back into Chief's helmet. He was the first off the transport, followed by the rest of his team. Cortana managed to hook up to the HUD's of the entire team, including Katarn who sported a one-eyed visor over his right eye. She explained, "I set a marker on the task force's last known location. We should meet up with them there."

"I'll take point." Chief called out, following Cortana's directions to the marker. They hiked for about twenty minutes when they came to a cliff, overlooking the giant UNSC base. Chief spotted several geth transport ships landing on the pads, along with two strange-looking transports. He zoomed in with his visor and noticed that the transports were unloading human soldiers with similar armor to Hawke's. Chief turned to say something to the Pilot.

"Those are IMC soldiers." Hawke stated, "They must have went through the same wormhole and met with Saren. They're working together."

"It would appear so." They jumped at the sound of the British accented voice. They turned to see three men dressed in dark UNSC armor, similar to ODST armor. The speaker kept his helmet under his left arm and held a cigar in his right hand. He smiled, showing off his horseshoe shaped moustache, "You must be the rest of my team."

"Master Chief Petty Officer Sierra-117," Chief introduced himself and then his team, "These are Pilot Hawke, Tali'Zorah, and Master Katarn."

"Please, it's Kyle." Kyle interrupted.

"Right." The man nodded, "I'm Captain Price of UNSC Task Force 141. These are my squad mates, Soap MacTavish and Desmond Miles."

Chief took a good look at the other two. Soap was of similar built to Price, only a little younger. He had shaved the sides of his head, leaving a small Mohawk on the top of his head. He carried a silenced assault rifle, just like Price.

The other one, Miles, was a little taller than Soap. He had a cut on his lip, running from right under his nose to above his chin. His hair was short and he had a little bit of stubble on his face. His armor and weapons were the same as the other two but his gauntlets. At the glove, large bulges poked out underneath that were very different than Soap and Price's gloves.

"Now, that we're all set," the British man said, "Let's get a move on. Is the sniper in place?"

Chief nodded. Somewhere in the hilltops, the turian sniper from the Normandy, Garrus, was up there with the ODST sniper Romeo. He watched Garrus in the armory's training area a few hours ago and he never missed. That was what he wanted to see.

The seven of them rappelled down the cliff side and over the metal gate. Once they were inside the base, they moved through the shadows, avoiding geth patrols. Tali explained that attacking one of them would cause the entire base to know that they were there. Chief didn't want to risk that.

They continued to move until they reach the security outpost. Kyle pressed his hand to the wall, "Three targets. Two geth, one human, and one I don't recognize."

Chief shot him a look, "Describe it."

"Very tall. Silver armor. Hoof feet." Kyle described it.

"Chief, do you thinkâ€¦|" Cortana started to say what he was thinking.

"It's an Elite." He grunted, "Saren has the Covenant working for him, too."

"Bloody hell, mate." Price whispered, "What do we do about the geth?"

"Allow me." The quarian spoke up and brought up her orange omni-tool. She poked around on it for several moments and looked up, "They should be deactivated."

Kyle pressed his hand to the wall and nodded, "The flashlights are out."

"Alright, quick and quiet." Price pointed at the door and Soap and Miles stacked up on opposite sides of it. Price leaned against the wall behind Soap while Chief took up a position behind Miles. Hawke, Kyle, and Tali stayed back to watch for patrols.

Price held up three fingers and counted down to one. On one, the four of them shot into the room. Price sent a bullet into the head of one of the geth while Miles took out the other. Soap made short work of the human as Chief sprinted passed them.

The Sangheli Elite stood up and attempted to activate his energy sword but Chief was too quick. He knocked the blade from the alien's hand and tucked his pistol under his chin.

"Just kill me, Demon." The Elite spat.

"Not until you tell me where Halsey is." Chief demanded.

"I would if we knew where she was. We've been searching the entire base for her." The Sangheli claimed and Chief back off. He was about to stun him when Miles drew his silenced pistol and popped a shot



into the side of the Elite's head.

"What was that for?" Chief asked.

"It was too risky to let him live." The man stated.

"That may be how Task Force 141 does things but it's not how I run things." Chief barked but Miles just flicked him off.

It took all Cortana's strength to keep Chief from lunging at the man and ripping him to shreds. Price stepped in between them and looked Miles in the eye, "I give the orders, Miles. Did I order to kill him? No. You need to keep yourself in check or I'll have you cleaning toilets for a month. You got it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bloody right, you do." Price looked at Chief, "I'm sorry about that, mate. He's still new to the Task Force. It won't happen again."

"It better not, Captain." Chief stuck Cortana into the computer terminal as Tali and Kyle moved in. Tali took a seat behind the desk and began typing away. Using her omni-tool for help, she managed to locate a possible location of Halsey.

"Main building, basement floor." She said, "But she's moving. It will be hard to track her on the move."

Cortana appeared in her blue form, "Chief, we can stay here and track her while you make a move for her."

"I'm not leaving you." He told her.

"You said the same thing on High Charity, Chief, and the same when we defeated the Didact. I know you won't leave me. That is why I'm okay with you going after her because I know you won't fail." She pleaded and he nodded.

"Captain, can you leave Soap and Miles behind to protect them while Kyle, Hawke, you, and I make an assault on the main building?" Chief asked the captain.

"Consider it an order." Price said, pointing to Soap and Miles, "You keep them safe and your radios on."

"Aye, sir." Soap said and Miles nodded.

"Let's move, then." Price sounded as the four of them dashed out of the building and made their way to the large structure at the center of the base. Two geth soldiers guarded the door and Price was about to suggest a way around them when their blue lights turned red. They turned and entered the building, "That can't be good."

"They might have found Halsey. We need to move." Chief ordered and they ran for the door that the geth just answered. The door opened up to a long hallway with no geth in sight. They continued to move, following the sound of the geth moving in on their target.

At the end of the hallway, they opened the door to a large hanger bay filled with UNSC vehicles. Several transport Warthogs lined the room,

along with two Hornets, ten Mongooses, and a single Scorpion tank.

"The hunt is over!" a booming voice called through the hanger. Chief and his team took cover behind a pile of cargo carts. Chief peered around the corner to see who was speaking.

Standing six feet tall in golden armor, a large Elite held an energy sword in his right hand and a human figure in the other. Chief zoomed in to confirm his fears. The human was Doctor Catherine Halsey.

The older woman wore a white lab coat over a pair of tan slacks and a white polo shirt. A UNSC name badge was snapped to the right side of her shirt and it read MIRANDA in capital letters. Chief shook his head. Miranda Keyes was Halsey's only daughter and she had died during the Human-Covenant War. She was a friend of Chief's and seeing her name brought an emotion that he attempted to hide.

"Transport is on route to bring us back to the Forerunner planet!" the Elite yelled and several Grunts and Elites cheered.

Chief pulled out his Battle Rifle and adjust the aim. He knew he wouldn't be able to kill the Elite from his distance but he could give Halsey a chance to get away from him. He focused on the Sangheli's sword arm and fired. The bullet knocked the energy sword right from his hand.

The Sangheli looked up in the direction of the shot and spotted Chief, "Demon! Kill the Demon!"

He didn't even notice Halsey making a run for it.

Chief and his team start to fight their way through the room. He popped several shots into some nearby Grunts and an Elite. Price took out a group of geth with a grenade while Hawke made a jump pack dive onto one of the Sangheli warriors. Kyle, lightsaber in hand, went toe to toe with three Elites. Chief had seen the Jedi's skill and he almost felt bad for the aliens.

The Sangheli leader retrieved his blade and stormed after Halsey. He managed to recapture her and was pulling her towards a nearby Warthog. Two other Elites followed suit. Chief and his team made it to their own Warthog and the chase was on.

The sun was starting to come up over the hilltop and Chief was running out of team. If the Elites extracted Halsey, his mission would fail. He wasn't going to let that happen.

Chief hopped into the back of the Warthog and was disappointed that it didn't have a turret on it. Price drove with Kyle in the passenger seat. Hawke joined Chief on the back and they were off. They bent around the corner and followed Halsey's Warthog. Her car broke through the metal gate and into the hilly surroundings. They curved around a bend and managed to catch up with them. They zoomed out of the hilltops and into a long stretch of road, leading up to a long, metal bridge. The bridge connected the two river banks and Chief looked to see a giant waterfall directly under the bridge. He didn't want to fall down there.

He stood up and aimed his rifle at the Warthog. He targeted the

Sangheli that stood in the back with Halsey. He carried a plasma rifle in one hand, holding Halsey with the other. He took some pot shots at him but Chief didn't budge. The balls of plasma shot over him and he fired his own gun. Two Battle Rifle bullets slammed into the side of the alien's head, killing him on impact.

Price got them along side of the Warthog, just as they hit the bridge. Chief jumped to the Warthog and drew his magnum. The passenger Sangheli stood up but Chief sat him back down with six shots to the face. He grabbed Halsey and jumped, just as Kyle shoved his lightsaber blade into the side of the car.

The Warthog flipped twice before coming to a stop. Chief activated his hardlight shield and Halsey and he slammed against the ground with it. The force of the jump made them ride the shield like sled until it came to a stop.

"Well," Halsey coughed, "you sure took your time getting here."

Chief stood up without saying a word. Back by the Warthogs, Price was investigating when he noticed something blue. He belt down to look and his eyes widen, "Move! We got to move!"

Without asking, the three of them bolted from the Warthogs and barely made it away from the massive explosion. The Warthogs were engulfed in a field of blue fire as the bridge rattled under them. The bridge slanted and the prone figures of Price, Hawke, and Kyle begun to slide down as the burning Warthogs fell into the waterfall below. Kyle grabbed ahold of the railing and Price's arm, saving him from falling. On the other side, Hawke fell off the edge, only to be saved by the green Spartan arm of Chief.

Chief and Kyle pulled them up and they stood at the end of the bridge with Halsey. Chief pressed the side of his helmet, "This is Chief. We have the VIP and we are ready for extraction."

"This is \_Bearclaw\_." A man's voice answered, "ETA five minutes."

"Chief, I don't think we have five minutes." Price pointed to the end of the bridge that they had come from. Standing at the other end was the Scorpion tank from the hanger, several geth-Covenant soldiers, and two larger geth. The larger geth reminded Chief of Covenant Scarab. He hoped they were nowhere near as tough as them.

"Chief," Price called, "we have no bloody cover. Orders."

Chief was about to say something when Hawke stepped forward. He turned his head back at Chief and nodded, "Leave this one to me."

\*\*Can you guess at what Hawke's going to do next chapter? Stay tuned to find out.\*\*

\*\*Thank you so much for reading and don't forget to review!\*\*

**\*\*You asked for it so here it is. The first Titanfall of the story.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading and I hope you all enjoy this chapter\*\***

**\*\*I don't own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Seven: Titanfall\*\***

**\*\*In the Titan Drop Zone\*\***

**\*\*Of the M-COR/UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over Chi Ceti IV\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Lieutenant Sarah stood over the large computer terminal in her new UNSC uniform. She had to admit that the dark blue uniform was a lot more comfortable than her black M-COR uniform. Her crew had adapted to the change better than Graves had expected. The new weapons and armor were enough to bring moral up a little bit.

She looked and saw what she was hoping she wasn't going to have to see. A small red light on her terminal told her that Pilot Ian Hawke was making a request. She pressed the button and said into the microphone, "Pilot Hawke, your Titan is ready."

"Perfect." He said, "I marked the drop point."

She took a deep breath and said, "Commence Titanfall."

**\*\*On a destroyed bridge\*\***

**\*\*On Chi Ceti IV\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"Leave this one to me." Hawke said to his squad as he stepped forward. Out of the sky, a massive fireball crashed into the earth in front of the bridge, in between him and the enemy. He dashed forward and used his jump pack to climb his way to the top of the crouching object. The blue shield around it shimmered as plasma shots deflected off of it.

He slid into the cockpit and thumbed through some of settings. Once it was linked up with his systems, Hawke willed it to stand to his full height. Standing at twenty feet tall, the metal giant looked exactly like a headless person. It reacted to Hawke's commands with the slightest touch.

The Titan grabbed the 40mm cannon off its back and Hawke smiled as he pointed it at the tank. With one trigger pull, a mighty shot flew from the barrel and turned the Scorpion into a pile of rubble. The geth Colossus, as he remembered Shepherd calling them, turned towards him and started charging its energy cannon.

Hawke's Atlas lowered its rifle and waited for the beam to fire. He rose up his left hand and a blue energy field appeared in front of

him. As the beam hit the shield, it turned to a light purple. When Hawke let go of it, the beam shot back at the Colossus. The beam took out its right side legs. Hawke used the Titan's massive hand to grab the Colossus by the neck and slam it into the other one, causing one hell of an explosion.

He looked down and spotted that the foot soldiers were massing around him and were attempting to climb up the side of his Titan. Without really worrying, Hawke hit a red button with an image of a white cloud with a lightning bolt through it on it. Out of a set of pipes on the sides of the Titan, white smoke puffed out and around it. The smoke engulfed a majority of the soldiers before electric currents begun to flow through it.

Knowing that they were dealt with, Hawke sent the Titan backwards in a speedy dash. Red alerts appeared on his screen. He turned the Titan to his right and spotted six purple fighters coming towards him in an attack formation. He smiled as the Titan reached out its left arm in their direction. On his targeting computer, the purple dots were surrounded by orange hexagons. Once they were locked on and in range, the orange hexagons turned to crimson. He fired six missiles at the incoming fighters and they didn't stand a chance. They turned to clouds of purple smoke upon impact.

"This is Pelican \_Bearclaw\_." A voice came through his headset, "We are inbound but you have an incoming Phantom coming from the south side of the bridge."

Confused on what a Phantom was, Hawke spun his Titan around to the left side of the bridge. Rising up from below the bridge-line, a purple and pink ship appeared. More red alerts rung through his Titan as he brought his gun up to fire. Before he could get a shot off, a green missile at him and he didn't have time to react. The missile hit his Titan's right arm, causing the joints to overreact and drop the 40mm.

Hawke couldn't get the right arm to react to his commands so he did what he had to do. He willed the Titan to back up as far as he could get it and run forward. When it reached the end of the bridge, he made it jump and slam into the nearby Phantom. The Titan grabbed onto it with its left hand and was forcing it to descend because of the increased weight.

Hawke thumbed through a few commands and a yellow triangle with a exclamation mark appeared on the terminal, "Commencing self-destruct."

He grabbed the red pull lever between his legs and smiled as he pulled it towards him.

**\*\*On a destroyed bridge\*\***

**\*\*On Chi Ceti IV\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Chief and the rest of his team watched in awe as the giant robot that Hawke had summoned jumped at the Phantom. They bolted to the edge to watch as it exploded before hitting the water below. They looked away in fear that Hawke had not made it.

They jumped when they heard a pair of footsteps behind them. Standing there was the M-COR Pilot. Price grabbed the man and said, "What the bloody hell was that?"

"That, my friend, was a Titan." Hawke said, "I know you are all amazed but we do have some bad guys left to shoot."

He pointed to his right and Chief noticed that the white smoke had cleared and some geth soldiers had survived. The Bearclaw zoomed over top of them and landed behind them. The hatch lowered and a strange looking alien stood with a sniper rifle in his arms. Chief had read the files and knew that it was Garrus Vakarian, turian sniper.

The sniper took some shots at the advancing geth as the five of them rushed for the Pelican. Another figure joined the turian and Chief could tell that it was Soap. That meant that Cortana was with them. He ran a little faster.

He hopped on board and looked around, "Where is she?"

The armored quarian stood up and handed the Spartan the blue microchip, "I kept her safe for you, sir."

Chief nodded and plugged her back in, "You missed me."

Once everyone was on board, the Pelican lifted off, closed the hatch, and headed for the Birmingham.

**\*\*In Lasky's Private Hanger Bay\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Since the size of their little group had grown so large over the last couple of days, Lasky had a holotable moved to his private hanger so he could include everyone in on the meetings. He stood alone in the hanger, waiting for the others to arrive. He leaned his arms on the table and said, "Roland, I have a question."

The orange AI appeared before him, "Yes, sir?"

"I need to make sure I made the right call." He said, "After a close analysis of Sovereign and its fleet compared to the Infinity, we should have been able to wipe the floor with them. I need to know if we had to leave that planet or not."

Roland nodded, "I will run a quick test using the possible factors at the time. One moment."

The AI closed his eyes for a second before speaking, "It will be easier if I show you."

He turned into a holographic image of the space that the Infinity controlled when they were orbiting the Forerunner base. However, he only showed the Infinity orbiting it. An image of the Reaper capital ship and the geth ships appeared to the front side of the Infinity, "If the Infinity was at its best, her MAC cannons would

easily destroy the advancing Reaper while her Archer missiles would make short work of the geth ships."

As he spoke, the holographic \_Infinity\_ engaged in combat with the enemy ships, destroying them without much of a scratch. The image changed again to a more familiar scene. It showed the \_Infinity\_ with the \_Birmingham\_ in tow and Saren's fleet, "With our shields down and a disabled ship attached to us, the results would look more like this:"

The \_Infinity\_ fired a MAC cannon shot at Sovereign, destroying it in one shot alone. Several geth capital ships moved into position and started firing on the \_Birmingham\_, destroying the tows that attached it to the larger ship. Even though the \_Infinity\_ was firing its secondary and tertiary weapons at the ships, the \_Birmingham\_ started to explode all over, forcing the crew to abandon ship.

Several more moments went by and the geth ships were gone, leaving a damaged \_Infinity\_ in their place. The image changed back to Roland, "I ran the sims two thousand times, sir, and the results were all the same. The \_Infinity\_ would have survived the attack but the \_Birmingham\_ and almost half of the \_Infinity\_'s crew would have been lost, sir."

"All because our shields were down?" Lasky asked.

"If our shields were up, we wouldn't have lost that many men and the \_Birmingham\_ would have a slightly higher chance of survival but it wouldn't be likely." Roland explained.

"Thank you, Roland." Lasky said, "I needed that."

The AI disappeared and the door to the hanger opened, causing his allies to flood in around the table. The first one to speak was Jedi Master Kyle Katarn and Lasky didn't what he had to say, "Admiral, I have some really bad news."

**\*\*In the forest surrounding the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On a Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Jaden knelt down in the green bush with Dutch and Rookie behind him. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. The odd beings that he had fought when he first arrived through the FIB were helping the geth and Sangheli soldiers with fortifications. They were building something but Jaden couldn't tell what it was.

A few hours after the \_Infinity\_ left the system, a strange ship had appeared in the system with another ship in its tow. It stopped at the Reaper and something was exchanged. Information was Jaden's first thought but he realized soon that they wanted to work with Saren. Before he could contact his master to warn him, the trio was attacked by some strange looking creatures that reminded Jaden of rancors. The rancor-like beasts had injured the ODST Rookie pretty badly and Jaden had used the Fore to heal him. That had weakened him very much and it was a few days before he could even attempt to use the Force.

That was one of Jaden's weaknesses. While he is very strong in the Force, he would find himself depleted of it for many days after a large usage. Master Skywalker explained that it was the Force's way of making him balanced since he was so strong in it. Whatever it was, he didn't like having to take a day long nap after healing someone.

That was when he spotted the purple and pink ship land on one of the pads. It looked like a giant bug to Jaden but that didn't make him feel better. He looked back at the ODST, hoping for an explanation.

Dutch, with his orange plated orange, whispered, "That's a Phantom."

"I thought you told me that you wiped out the entire Covenant?" Jaden questioned.

"There are still pockets of them in space." Dutch stated and Rookie nodded, "We can't kill them all. It appears that the ship in the cruiser's tow was an IMC battleship. I guess the Militia wasn't the only one that thought going through a wormhole was a good idea."

"Just great." Jaden muttered and returned his attention back to the tower. He noticed that several of the soldiers were moving away from one of the landing pads. He waited patiently for whatever was coming through.

Moments later, his fears came to life when a large freighter appeared with green and orange markings all over it. Two twin cannons were attached to the nose of the ship and the cockpit was located towards the back of it. He knew the ship well. It was the \_Slave II\_, Boba Fett's personal starship.

The armored bounty hunter, with his Mandalorian battle rifle in his hands and six silver handled lightsabers hanging from his hips, stepped off with a black hooded figure. Down from the tower, Jaden caught his first glimpse at the turian mastermind behind everything. His harden face was nothing like the turian image that Kyle had forwarded to his mind a few hours ago. Instead of the blue tattoo marks that Garrus has, his face was completely vacant of any marks. His body was mostly similar to Garrus, except one of his arms. His former arm was gone and was replaced by a geth-looking one.

Jaden felt the hair stand up on his neck. If they were here, that means they had to get pass Rosh. Jaden had a weird feeling in the pit of his stomach that something bad had happened to his friend. He felt a little better when he noticed that Fett wasn't carrying Rosh's lightsaber on his hip.

The cyborg stood a few meters from the new arrivals and he bowed. Jaden couldn't hear what was being said but he knew that he was welcoming them to the tower. The hooded strange, who radiated dark side Force energy, approached Saren and extended her hand. She shook it and pointed up.

The tower came to life again as an energy beam shot from it into the sky above. The beam stopped above the surface of the planet and something appeared in the sky. It was three dagger shaped objects



that brought worry to Jaden's mind. They were three Imperial Star Destroyers.

Jaden looked at his allies, "I need to contact my master."

**\*\*In Lasky's Private Hanger\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Lasky took in Kyle's words with silence. The Jedi had spent the last twenty minutes explaining what his young apprentice had seen. Not only is Saren's ground forces getting stronger, his fleet is increasing. Kyle handed Lasky had data pad with information on typical Star Destroyers. Lasky nodded when he realized that the three of them together equaled the power that his own ship had, "Doctor Halsey, do you have any idea how they managed to teleport three dreadnoughts into our galaxy?"

The older woman spoke up, "Admiral, in my experience with Forerunner artifacts, they usually need some sort of object. The Halo rings needed the Icon, for instance. My theory is that this bounty hunter and Jedi found one in their galaxy and used it to send these ships into our galaxy."

"Could this same 'Icon' teleport them back?" asked Liara T'soni, the asari scientist.

Halsey shrugged, "It's hard to say without ever seeing this FIB."

"You almost did, Doctor." Lasky stated, "The hard way. When Pilot Hawke activated the tower, he damaged it somehow. Saren and his men wanted you to fix it."

"Let me guess," she smirked, "you want the same thing."

"What Admiral Lasky means, Doctor," Jedi Grand Master Luke Skywalker cut in, "you're our only hope to return to our homes. If all of us don't return to our galaxies and universes, they will remain unbalanced. Shepherd's universe will fall to the Reapers. The Dark Side of the Force will ascend back to power and the Frontier will remain lawless and under IMC control. You have a chance to save millions, maybe billions."

"I understand, Master Jedi," she stated, "I am in. I just want you to know, Admiral Lasky, that this better not end up like Requiem."

Lasky nodded, "Then, without further interruption, we have an assault to plan. In the meantime, Commander Palmer, find me the \_Shadow of Intent\_."

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the \*\*\_\*\*Shadow of Intent\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Thel 'Vadam entered the bridge was greeted by a pair of Sangheli guards. They escorted him to the front of the bridge where he was to meet with his close friend and the Shipmaster of the \_CAS\_-class assault carrier. The Sangheli Shipmaster turned towards him, "Good, you got my message."

"You found a Loyalist base?" The Arbiter asked him.

The Shipmaster nodded, "Among other things."

"What do you mean?"

"Our scouts spotted some strange looking ships landing in the station. They don't match anything we've ever seen before." R'tas 'Vadam told him.

"I want to check this out, personally."

'Vadam smiled, "I was hoping you would say that."

"Tell my men to meet me in the hanger bay."

"They're already there."

'Vadam didn't wait for him to dismiss him. He marched his way out of the bridge and down the lift to the hanger bay. He found his Sangheli warriors leaning on some purple cargo crates. They jumped to attention as he approached but he waved them off. He motioned for the six Elites to follow him, "The seven of us are going to join the assault on the Loyalist base for one reason only. Find out who owns those strange looking ships and kill them."

"Sounds brutal." A blue plated Sangheli stated, "I like it."

They stepped into the blue light and they floated into the Phantom. The Arbiter opened a small locker and pulled out a silver handle. He squeezed the handle and the energy sword activated. He held the humming blade up to his face and smirked. He deactivated it and attached it to the small of his back and added a second on to it, as well. He grabbed two handheld plasma rifles and snapped them to his hips. The rifles were small enough for a Sangheli to hold in one hand. The final weapon he pulled out was a purple carbine with a green ammo chip in it. He slipped the carbine into the metal holster on his back.

He turned to see his soldiers were doing the same thing. He nodded at his lieutenant and headed for the front of the Phantom. He noticed that a green plated Sangheli sat behind the controls, "You're not my pilot."

"Arbiter, sir, K'lean 'Irem had an injury in the training ring. He will not be joining you on this mission." The pilot stated.

"What was he doing in the training ring?" the Arbiter barked at him.

"Fighting his brother." The pilot responded, "Fighting me, sir."

"I didn't know 'Irem had a brother on board."

"Neither did he."

Arbiter nodded, "Well, if you're half the pilot he is, you will do. Lift off when you're ready."

'Vadam rejoined his team in the back and took a seat. They would be arriving at the Loyalist base soon enough. He leaned his head back and closed his eyes.

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the \*\*\_\*\*Millennium Falcon\*\*\_**

**\*\*Overlooking Covenant Loyalist Space Station \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

The Millennium Falcon zipped out of hyperspace into the heat of a full out battle between the Separatists and the Loyalists. Han had to pull some tricky flying to avoid some stray plasma shots. Once he had his ship level, he attempted to raise the Shadow of Intent. They didn't respond, "Well, it was worth a shot."

He looked back at the orange visor of the Spartan. Master Chief spoke in his deep voice, "'Vadum is in the heat of battle. Tell them that we are friendly and are going to help with the main assault."

"This is the Millennium Falcon to Shadow of Intent^, we are friendly." Han said into his headset, "I have UNSC forces on board and will assist with the main assault."

Han noticed that the red marker on his scanner turned blue, showing that the Sangheli Shipmaster heard his message. He shook his head. He doesn't even have time to say hello, he thought as he pushed his ship through the battle. He dodged plasma fires with blinding speed and made it to the space station.

He landed the ship down in a large hanger bay filled with Phantoms and one ship that really caught his eye. He nudged Chewy and pointed, "Do you see that?"

The Wookiee let off a low growl to tell Han that he did. It was a pearl white space shuttle with a bird-like cockpit and a pair of wings that were pinned up above it. It was a Lambda-class T-4a Imperial transport shuttle which meant that the Empire was here.

**\*\*On Covenant Loyalist Space Station \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Master Chief stepped off of the Falcon with his Battle Rifle drawn. The hanger was already littered with dead Loyalist Sangheli and Kig-Yar bodies and a single purple Phantom. Chief had seen the Phantom before and it was the only time he was ever happy to see it, "Thel 'Vadam is on the station. We find him, help him destroy the station, and recruit him."

His newly official team joined him in the hanger. While he took command of the unit, he shared his role with Commander Shepherd.

Chief had only talked to the human commander for a few minutes and he had already grown to trust him. His crew told him that he had that kind of effect on people. Under the two of them, Shepherd's lieutenant, Kaiden Alenko, and Task Force 141's Captain Price had joined them. Making up the rest of the squad was the rest of TF-141, Pilot Hawke, and Garrus Vakarian. To everyone's surprise, Shepherd hadn't been the one to request the turian to join them. It was Chief.

Stepping off the Falcon last was Jedi Master Kyle Katarn, dressed in his usual brown and tan outfit. He held his lightsaber in one of his hands and said, "Don't worry about me, Chief. I got some business to take care of."

Before the Spartan could object, the Jedi zoomed passed him and through an automatic doorway. Chief nodded at the fleeing Jedi and headed for the other door with his team. The eight of them moved through the hallway, following the trail of dead bodies that the Arbiter had left for them. They passed through two rooms without so much of a problem.

They entered the large, central chamber. The chamber ran the height of the station and a large energy beam ran from top to bottom. Cortana determined that the energy beam was what was powering the entire station.

"This is Arbiter 'Vadam to Ghost squad," Chief heard the familiar voice come from a nearby Sangheli, who was leaning against the guard rail with a needler shot in his chest. In his hand was a small communicator, "do you hear me?"

Chief picked up the communicator and pressed the pink button on the side of it, "This Master Chief Sierra-117 of the UNSC to Arbiter Thel 'Vadam, your Ghost squad is dead. Where are you?"

"Spartan," the deep voice called through the speaker, "it has been too long since we last shared the battle field. What do we owe this honor?"

"We were in the neighborhood." Chief answered.

The Sangheli laughed, "Since you decided to stop by, I could use your help. We are moving to the top of the station to destroy the energy beam that's powering the station. The power supply comes from both the top and bottom of the station and they need to be destroyed at the same time to ensure that the station will be destroyed."

"I'm guessing Ghost squad was to destroy the bottom?"

"You got it, Spartan."

"Alright, Arbiter, we will destroy the bottom power supply for them. After, you and I need to have a talk." Chief told him.

"I look forward to it." Was the Arbiter's response.

"We'll keep in touch." Chief attached the communicator to his hip and waved for his team to follow him.

\*\*Thank you so much for reading and I'm thinking of starting a second

story from the bad guy's point of view. It will help fill in any plot holes I had created in previous chapters.\*\*

\*\*I hope you enjoyed this chapter and don't forget to leave me feedback!\*\*

## 8. Chapter 8: Arbiter

\*\*Hey, guys, sorry I didn't get to post yesterday. The holidays are always so busy for me.\*\*

\*\*Here's what happens on the \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_\*\* along with some relationship building.\*\*

\*\*Thank you for reading and don't forget to leave a review\*\*

\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Eight: The Arbiter\*\*

\*\*On Covenant Loyalist Space Station \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

Commander Shepherd followed Master Chief through another doorway but his mind was elsewhere. He couldn't get over the fact that the Arbiter that Chief had spoken to had sounded so much like Captain Anderson that he had almost been the one to jump for the communicator himself. He knew that it was impossible that it was Anderson but the thought made him homesick.

That was the one thing he never thought he would feel. Ever since his parents died, Shepherd's home was the Alliance. Anderson had kept an eye on him but Shepherd had grown up on his own. Being in the strange universe was enough to make his head spin around. He shook it off to focus on the mission.

The rounded a corner and into another room. The Sangheli warriors turned and shot at them. Shepherd ducked behind some cover and popped a few shots from his Avenger assault rifle. The projectile shot nailed the Elite in the side of the head, killing it.

Out of another door, some strange, white armored soldiers stormed into the room. To Shepherd's surprise, they fired red laser shots in their direction and seemed to be working with the aliens. That would explain the ship in the hanger, he thought back to the grey colored transport they spotted before.

He fired back at them, hitting two in the chest. The laser shots came at him but missed by a mile. Who taught these guys to shoot, he asked himself.

He looked to his left to see Chief returning fire from his rifle. The bullets cut through the white armor like knives. He turned to his right and was glad to see that Garrus had stayed close to him, "Having fun, Garrus?"

"This is like shooting hanar in a bucket." The turian called out, "A

few more and I will take the lead."

Shepherd shook his head. He was surprised how relaxed the turian was in combat. After centuries of training and military life, the turians were born soldiers. He would never tell Wrex this but he thought that the turians were tougher than the krogan.

Once the room was clear, they headed down a few stairs until Cortana stopped them, "There should be a terminal that's connected to the bottom power source. Plug me in, Chief."

The Spartan found it and did as he was told. The blue hologram appeared and hummed as she searched.

**\*\*On Covenant Loyalist Space Station \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy\*\***

'Vadam lowered the communicator and looked up at his lieutenant. It had been Lieutenant 'Kaben's idea to let the young Sangheli lead Ghost squad for the mission and it had cost them dearly. Four of his best men were dead and there was nothing he could do about it.

The blue armored lieutenant lowered his head, "My judgment was misplaced, Arbiter. I am sorry."

"We'll deal with that later." The Arbiter barked, "We can't change that but we can change the outcome of this base. Let's go blow it up."

He beckoned them to follow him through a doorway in the top chamber. The chamber was circular with a set of stairs leading up to a viewport. Two figures stood at the top of the chambers.

One of them was a Sangheli leader with orange armor and plating sticking up around his shoulders. The other looked human but he wore a black hood over his head. The Sangheli turned and smirked at the three Elites that stood before him, "Arbiter 'Vadam, to what do I owe the honor?"

The base shuttered as it survived a shot from the \_Shadow\_. Arbiter stepped forward, sword in hand, "To kill you."

The Sangheli laughed, "I would like to see you try, 'Vadam."

The Sangheli activated his energy sword and the human pulled out a silver cylinder. He pressed a button on it and a long, red beam shot out. The beam stopped at about a meter and he held it in both his hands.

The Arbiter and his two companions raced up the stairs and attacked. The Sangheli swung his sword high at the Arbiter but it was deflected. 'Vadam grabbed his second blade off his back and swung it at him. The Loyalist jumped back, missing him by centimeters.

The hooded man fought back Arbiter's commandoes. He kicked one of them in the chest, sending him falling backwards down the stairs. He blocked the other one's attack and their blades hummed. The commando lowered his shoulder into the other man, breaking his defense.

'Vadam swung his blade at the Loyalist and their blades met. The Loyalist was pushing back with his all his strength, a rookie move. The Arbiter used his other sword to run it into the Sangheli's chest. The Loyalist dropped his blades and grabbed the Arbiter's forearm, "You are only stalling our advance. The gods will grant us true power soon enough."

He pulled his blade and kicked him backwards. He turned to see that his lieutenant was lying dead with an arm missing while another commando fought the stranger. Before he could react, the man reached his hand out at the commando and lifted him a foot off the ground. He flexed his fingers and lightning shot from his fingertips. The Sangheli commando screamed out in pain.

The man tossed him aside and stared bullets at the Arbiter. 'Vadam crossed his swords, "What is this magic?"

"This is no magic, alien." The man said, "There is only the Force."

The man lunged but it wasn't the Arbiter's swords that stopped him. It was a blue laser sword, similar to the man's sword, which stood between them. At the other end of the sword, a brown haired human wielded it.

The newcomer pushed the other man away from them and charged with his sword in an attack formation. The blade broke right through any defense that the man would try and the newcomer's sword went right through the other man's body.

The man deactivated his sword and turned to the Sangheli and nodded at him, "I figured you had him but it's been awhile."

"Who are you?" the Arbiter asked.

"Kyle Katarn, at your service." Kyle bowed, "You must be Thel 'Vadam. I was told to find you."

"Find me? Find me for what?"

"I'll explain later. I'm pretty sure you want to blow up this base." Kyle said, pointing to the terminal.

The Elite nodded and made his way for it. He grabbed the communicator off his hip and said, "Spartan, I am ready when you are."

**\*\*On Covenant Loyalist Space Station \*\*\_\*\*Regret\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"Spartan, I am ready when you are." The deep voice of 'Vadam came through the communicator.

Chief grabbed it off his belt as he fired a left handed magnum shot at an incoming white soldier. He pressed the button and spoke over the combat, "We're at the power station, ready to go on your mark."

He looked back at Cortana's blue hologram and she nodded at him. He

dash towards her and yanked the chip from the system. He slammed her back into his head and they were off, "Ten minutes, Chief."

"Let's move!" he yelled to his team and something caught his eye. Two soldiers and a Sangheli were floating in midair. Chief had seen the Jedi in combat but Katarn wasn't with him. He noticed the blue energy coming off the bodies and looked to see Shepherd's lieutenant, Alenko, causing the effect. All around his body was light blue energy that seemed to wrap around him like a cloak.

"I'll explain later." Cortana said in his head, "We need to move."

He nodded and called for the retreat. They left through the door that they had entered and raced through the hallways. They popped shots at attacking foes but didn't stop. They didn't have time to stop.

It took them six minutes to reach the hanger bay. The Arbiter's Phantom was zooming out of the hanger by the time they reached the Falcon. As they entered, Chief was surprised to see Katarn leaning on a couch. He looked up and said, "Well, what kept you?"

Chief shook his head as he stormed pass him and into the cockpit. He looked at the pilot and said, "We need to go."

Han didn't even second guess it. He thumbed through some settings and the Falcon was off. It jetted out of the hanger and Chief had just enough time to make it to a viewport to watch the show. As the counter reached zero on his HUD, two large explosions appeared at the top and bottom of the large station. Every light source that the station had went dark and it started to crash down to the planet below. As it broke through the atmosphere, it caught fire and Chief knew that everyone on board was dead.

He found a spot on the couch and relaxed.

**\*\*In the Grand Meeting Chambers\*\***

**\*\*Of the \*\*Shadow of Intent\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"I want answers." The Shipmaster slammed his fist against the table. The room was large enough for everyone to be a part of the meeting, "Who were those ships and why are they working with the Loyalists."

Kyle Katarn decided to answer, "They were the remains of the Galactic Empire from the galaxy of which I come from. Years ago, they ruled the galaxy with an iron fist until they were defeated by the Rebellion. The Rebellion restored the Republic and has been taking out small pockets of Imperial forces that still remain."

"Sound familiar?" Chief added.

"Quite." 'Vadum responded, "That doesn't explain the man that the Arbiter had to fight on the station."

Chief looked to Katarn. The Jedi nodded and continued, "I am a member of an ancient people known as the Jedi. We are the sworn peace



keepers of my galaxy. The man you saw on the station was my opposite. The man was a member of group called the Sith, or Dark Jedi. The Sith work against the Jedi and use the Dark Side of the Force to control the galaxy."

"What is this 'Force' that which you speak of?" asked the Arbiter.

"In my galaxy, everything is the Force. The Force guides everything and everyone throughout their lives." The Jedi Master explained, "There are people who can control the Force. Those people have the right to become Jedi. Sometimes, those Jedi fall to the Dark Side of the Force, creating the Sith."

"This 'Force', can we learn it?" the Arbiter asked.

Katarn shook his head, "Even since I arrived in this galaxy, I have not detected a single trace of the Force. It is even hard for me to call upon it since I am so far away from my galaxy. It is almost like the Force does not exist here."

The Arbiter nodded at the Jedi but he had no more questions for him. Instead, he turned his gaze to the strange looking alien in blue armor, "And you. Are you from the same galaxy?"

Garrus looked at the Sangheli and smiled, "No, not really, but I'm still not from around here."

The Elite looked confused so Shepherd spoke up, "We were on route to stop a rouge Spectre named Saren from unleashing the power of the Reapers upon our galaxy when we were hit by an energy beam. The beam knocked us off course and into a whole new universe. Your universe."

"That's insane." 'Vadum barked, "There are no other universes but our own."

"Then, explain why I grew up on planet called Earth but it wasn't the Earth that Chief took me too a few days ago." Shepherd responded.

Everything was quiet for a moment before the Arbiter spoke, "It makes sense."

His friend looked at him in surprise, "How?"

"It would explain where the Forerunners came from." He stated, "It has been a major unknown since the dawn of our time. Where did our gods come from? With this new knowledge of other universes, we can finally answer that question."

"I don't see your point." The Shipmaster crossed his arms.

"We know that humans are direct ancestors from the Forerunners. It is possible that the Forerunners spread themselves to other galaxies and universes to spread the human race. It would explain why their galaxies and universes have humans in them."

Cortana appeared before them on the table, "Thel has a good point. I have run the tests and the humans from the \_Birmingham\_, the

\_Normandy\_, the \_Falcon\_, and the \_Raven's Claw\_ all share similar DNA to the humans of our galaxy. That similar DNA is also similar to the Forerunners. Thel, I don't think you realize how close you are with that theory."

"Theory or not," Shepherd cut in, "we have to get home. The only way we are going to do that is by taking back the FIB and, to do that, we will need your help."

The Arbiter and the Shipmaster exchanged a pair of looks with each other before Thel 'Vadam spoke, "I'm joining the humans. Wither or not you join me is your choice to make."

'Vadam nodded, "The \_Shadow of Intent\_ will help you. You have our word."

"I will forward you the meeting site for the battle. We still have much planning to go over so we can get this off without too many surprises." Cortana told them and looked at the Arbiter, "We wish you would return to the \_Infinity\_ with us for your input on the planning."

The Sangheli nodded, "I will be."

**\*\*On an unknown Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Rookie and Dutch watched through their visors at the soldiers massing around the tower. They were building something but they couldn't figure out what it was. Neither of them had ever seen anything like it. The structure was as big as a house with strange markings all over it. A large spire sprouted out from the top.

They were building more just like them all around the tower. Rookie wished that Jaden was with them. He might be able to identify the new structures but his last talk with his master had left him pretty weak. They sat him down under a large tree so he could regain his strength.

"Hey, Rook, can you believe all this?" Dutch asked him in a whisper.

Rookie shook his head.

"I mean, multiple universes and life outside our galaxy. It's kinda hard to wrap your head around. It was hard enough believing the whole Forerunner thing but this? What do you think?"

Rookie shrugged.

"I forgot, Rook. You can't talk." Dutch told him, "I might as well be talking to myself."

Before Rookie could react, something changed in the sky. Three new ships appeared in orbit around the planet. He had never seen anything like them before. They were almost as large as the Star Destroyers but they looked to be grey and orange all over. They were too far away to make out any other images on them but they got a closer look at its inhabitants.

Touching down on one of the landing pads, a small orange transport dropped off three men in grey and orange uniforms and about eight armored men. Saren and the Sith, as Jaden called her, met with them at the base of the stairs. Rookie could see that Saren knew them all and greeted them warmly. He didn't like that.

"I'm guessing he called for backup." They jumped at the sound of the Jedi's voice behind them, "Who are they?"

"Probably the captains of the new ships." Dutch guessed.

Jaden nodded, "I think so. I think they are from the same galaxy as Saren."

"I think you might be right, Sleeping Beauty."

"I need to warn Kyle." Jaden turned but Dutch grabbed his arm.

"Are you crazy? You just recovered from last time. Give it some time. They aren't attacking any time soon." Dutch told him and the Jedi nodded.

"You're right. Let's get some sleep. I'll take the first watch."

**\*\*In the Lounge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Shepherd entered the low lit lounge and was surprised to see it so empty. He had just returned from the \_Shadow of Intent\_ and he need something to calm his mind. His head had been spinning for days but it really sunk in when he met the Arbiter. The Arbiter had hit home with his theory on the Forerunners. He didn't know who the Forerunners were but he didn't like the fact that he could be related to them.

He needed sometime to shake it off and he knew exactly where to find it.

The lounge had two people in it. The bartender kept his distance, cleaning glasses, from the other one. Shepherd had met her a few times but he almost didn't recognize her without her white armor on. Her hair was pulled back into a bun and Shepherd had almost thought she was Ashley. He forced himself to move to her left, "This seat taken?"

Commander Palmer looked up and shook her head, "No, not yet."

Shepherd took over the seat, "What you drinking?"

"Jamerson whiskey on the rocks."

"Jamerson? You guys still have that stuff in this universe?" Shepherd asked her and she nodded.

"You don't?"

"No, after we found the Council, most human breweries went under. All that's left is Jack Daniels."

"You guys have Jack? The Jack Daniels company lost their business when they tried to expand to the colonies. You can't find a drop of it anywhere in the galaxy." She looked excited as the bartender slid down a glass of the Jamerson whiskey to Shepherd. He took a light sip of the substance and set it back down.

"Commander," he said to her, "we are a lot alike. We hold the same positions in our respected militaries. We take care of our teams and we both like good whiskeys."

"You're not too bad, Shepherd." She finished her drink.

"Hey," he said after a long pause, "I have a bottle of Jack on the \_Normandy\_. Do you want it?"

She smiled and Shepherd hoped she would answer but something stopped her. It might have been she or the beep of her comm link. She looked at it and frowned, "I have to go, Shepherd. Maybe some other time."

She got up and left him alone in the room with the bartender. As she left, he whispered, "Yeah, some other time."

**\*\*In Pilot Hawke's Private Cabin\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC/M-CORE \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Ian Hawke sat with his feet up on the desk. He had his hands pulled behind his head for support and was snoring. He dressed in a pair of dark blue jeans and a tight black V-neck shirt. It was one of the few times he got to wear something different.

He was sporting a four day beard that he really didn't plan on shaving. It might have been against Graves's ideals for his crew but Hawke didn't care. His job was too important for Graves to lose him to a beard.

Hawke was awoken by a knock at the door. He nearly fell out of the chair at the sound of it. He rubbed the sleep from his green eyes and made his way to it. He opened the sliding door and was surprised to see Sarah standing in the doorway. In her hand, was a bottle of red wine.

"Lieutenant." He smirked.

"Shut up, Ian." She pushed passed him, "I'm going to guess you were asleep."

"How can you tell?"

She placed the bottle on the desk and wrapped her arms around the Pilot's neck, "Because I know you, Ian, and I could hear your snore down the hall."

Hawke smiled. She was the only person on the entire ship that he let call him Ian. She was the only person he let get close to him. Since the dawn on the Titan Wars, Sarah and he had been through some tough times. Losing MacAllen was the hardest. MacAllen had been like father to him so watching him die blowing up the Demeter refueling station brought a pain to his chest. He let out a deep breath, "He's really gone, huh?"

Sarah nodded, "Yeah, but he's still here. He's still alive in us. That's what matters."

Sarah always knows how to make him feel better. He smiled at her, "So, Lieutenant, you got plans tonight?"

She returned the smile, "Are you asking me out, Pilot?"

"I might, if you say yes." Was his answer.

And a kiss was her's. She planted her lips on his and everything felt right with the world. For the first time in a while, he didn't feel lost in space. He didn't feel like he was nowhere near home. The only thing that he felt was her and, for him, that was better than any universe they could get dumped into.

They pulled away for a second and he whispered, "Stay here tonight."

She nodded her head and kissed him again.

\*\*I know it was a little fluffy but you got to have a little romance.\*\*

\*\*Thank you for taking the time to read this chapter and I hope you would leave me some feedback.\*\*

## 9. Chapter 9: Planning

\*\*Who do you want to see in a Titan during the final battle? I'm going to set up a poll and see who everyone thinks should help lead the charge in one of the mighty Titans.\*\*

\*\*I hope you enjoy this chapter and don't forget to give me some feedback!\*\*

\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Nine: Planning\*\*

\*\*In Admiral Lasky's Private Hanger\*\*

\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\*

Admiral Lasky leaned on the table before him. Around it stood the leaders of the different militaries that were to take part in the coming battle.

Now-Captain Marcus Graves of the Birmingham looked comfortable in his UNSC uniform. Lasky had grown rather fond of the former IMC vice admiral and was glad that he was on their side. He couldn't imagine if the Covenant or Saren had found him before they did. He knew that they would never work with the IMC so it made Lasky wonder if they had found the IMC if they would have joined the Infinity.

Commander Shepherd wore his System Alliance uniform that he wore when they first met face to face and Lasky noticed that he replaced the many ribbons and metals that he earned. He had explained that after stealing the Normandy from the Alliance, he didn't feel right wearing the uniform. After a long talk with his crew, Shepherd felt that it was okay for him to wear it since he is representing the Alliance in this new universe.

Jedi Grand Master Luke Skywalker and his sister, Senator Leia Organa Solo, kept their backs straight and ready. Luke wore a black Jedi robe with his lightsaber hanging from the belt. His sandy hair was pushed back and out of his eyes. Leia wore a long white dress that passed her feet. She wore her hair in a pair of buns that sat on the sides of her head like two cinnamon buns.

Representing the Sangheili, Thel 'Vadam took his place at the opposite end of the table. His hunched body towered the others by a couple of feet. He wore his black, metal Arbiter armor that the Prophets had given him a long time ago. He carried his energy sword on the small of his back and a Plasma Rifle on his right hip. Everywhere the Sangheili went, he always went armed.

Time had come at last to start the planning process on the coming battle. Lasky felt good that the odds were in their favor but he was not too happy about how unpredictable his enemy was. He was use to the scorch earth policy that the Covenant had relied upon throughout the Human-Covenant War. He was used to being on the defensive, not the offensive.

He had Roland map out the space of which the battle would take place at. He kept it blank until he was ready to begin, "Alright, let's start with what we got. Lord Hood is sending us four Mako-class corvettes, four Gorgon-class heavy destroyers, two Halcyon-class light cruisers, and two Marathon-class heavy cruisers. I asked for more but he won't budge. He claims that he needs his fleets for more important things."

"I don't think he realizes how important this is." Shepherd stated.

"I agree, Shepherd," Lasky nodded, "but I can't change that. Along with those, we have the Shadow of Intent. 'Vadam, is your Shipmaster bringing anything else with him?"

The Arbiter nodded, "Two Covenant corvettes."

"Corvettes?" Graves questioned, "He can't spare anything bigger?"

"You haven't seen one of our corvettes in combat, Captain." 'Vadam countered, "The humans of this universe can vouch for their combat

skill."

"I can, first hand." Lasky added, "Now, the enemy."

Shepherd was the first to speak. As he spoke, Roland brought up images of the ships that Shepherd mentioned, "From my universe, Saren has Sovereign, four geth dreadnoughts, and six geth capital ships. The new ships that Jaden mentioned fit the profile for Fury-class Cerberus destroyers. If he is right, they have some serious fire power."

"You said the same thing about the Reaper but we know that a MAC cannon shot will send it to dark space the hard way." Lasky stated.

"I know and I hope that stays true for our sake."

Lasky looked to Graves for the next introduction, "Two IMC ships similar to the Birmingham. Most likely, they will be a part of the ground conflict since they have Titans on board."

"Are their Titans more advance than yours?" asked Lasky. He had watched Chief's HUD video on Hawke's Titan display. If the IMC Titans were stronger, he didn't like the looks of that.

"The Titans we have are stolen IMC Titans. In fact, the entire Birmingham is stolen IMC property. It has some of their more advancing tech in it." Graves explained.

Luke took the next turn, "They have three Imperial Star Destroyers. They are lesser class ones so they shouldn't be too much of a problem. Once their shields go down, they are floating scrap metal. I know a trick or two I can teach our pilots to disable the shields quickly."

"I'll tell them to meet with you ASAP, Grand Master." Lasky stated and looked at 'Vadam, "Any ideas on what the Covenant bring to the table?"

"One ship. A CAS-class like the Shadow of Intent. We lost track of the ship a month ago and it came up again in the Loyalists' databases on Regret. It will be there. I can promise that." The Sangheili Arbiter announced.

"Roland, relay the odds back to us. Go over all the data we have on all the ships." Lasky ordered the AI and the table went blank.

A few moments later, the orange holographic avatar appeared again, "As long as there are no surprises, we have the better odds. I ran the sims ten times and eight times we were victorious."

"Those are odds even your husband would like." Luke smiled at his sister, "When shall we start?"

"Hood said that the UNSC ships will arrive in two days' time. Make sure your teams are prepped and ready to go. Shepherd, 'Vadam, I'm pretty sure that Commander Palmer wants you both to join her in the armory with the rest of the ground commanders."

"I'll head down at once." Shepherd said and 'Vadam nodded.

The rest of the room was dismissed and raced off to give their orders out. Lasky brushed his hand over his dark hair and shook his head. As long as there are no surprises, Roland's words rolled through his head. This entire battle was a surprise. A week ago, the Infinity was patrolling planets, looking for Forerunner tech, and it found the mother lode, "Roland, get me Manufacturing."

"How come, sir?" the AI asked.

"I want them to make me an insurance policy." Was his response.

**\*\*On the Armory Deck\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Shepherd rode the elevator with the Sangheili Arbiter to the Armory deck. Something was bugging him since he first met the alien, "I have a question for you, Arbiter."

The Arbiter grunted, "Do all humans ask questions?"

"Only the smart ones." Was his answer.

"Shoot."

"Why don't you serve the Covenant?"

"I use to. A long time ago, I was a high ranking officer in the Covenant military. I organized the attack on the human planet of Reach and gave the order to follow the UNSC Pillar of Autumn into slipspace. What we found when he followed them was a massive Halo ring created by the Forerunners, the gods. We fought to the last man against the humans and the Flood until it was destroyed." The alien explained as the elevator stopped.

"By who?"

The Arbiter pointed a finger, "By him."

Shepherd followed his finger to the seven foot tall Spartan that met the end of it. Master Chief was too far away to hear them but Shepherd knew that he knew that they were there, "Chief destroyed the ring?"

The Arbiter nodded, "I was arrested, trialed, marked, and stripped of my rank for my failures on the Halo ring. Instead of death by execution, the Prophets gave me the title of Arbiter and sent me to do their personal bidding. It was during that time when I learned the truth about everything. I learned that the humans were not the enemy. The Prophets were and they were going to use the Halo rings to kill everyone in the galaxy."

"What did you do about that?" Shepherd asked.

"We stopped them." They both looked up to see Chief had joined them, "Together, we defeated the Prophet of Truth and destroyed the Flood. Upon our escape, our ship was cut in half. 'Vadam made it to Earth



while Cortana and I floated through space for four years until the \_Infinity\_ found us."

"Where did she find you?"

Chief turned away, "Come on, we have a mission to plan."

They followed the Spartan to center of the armory. A long table laid out before them, similar to the one in Lasky's hanger. Commander Palmer wore her white Spartan armor and stood at the end of the table. Starting from her right, Gunnery Sergeant Buck, Garrus Vakarian, and Jedi Master Kyle Katarn stood with their arms across their chests. On Palmer's left, Captain Price, Pilot Hawke, and Urdnot Wrex stood with stone faces. The three of them joined the motley crew of planners.

Buck and Price wore similar UNSC fatigues. Their pants were black with high cut boots. A large silver belt kept them from falling. They wore long sleeved shirts. The only difference between the two was that Buck's shirt had ODS on the back and Price's had TF-141 on its back.

Garrus wore his usual blue armor that he seemed to live in. He carried a Predator pistol on his right hip and kept his visor over his right eye. Shepherd knew that he never left home without it.

Wrex wore a set of red krogan armor that matched the crimson on his forehead. He carried his Claymore shotgun on the small of his back. He was rubbing his chin with his three fingered hand, showing off his battle scar that ran from above his nose to the bottom of his chin. Shepherd knew that Wrex was important but he didn't realize how important until Virmire. Wrex was the clan leader for Clan Urdnot and he had plans for the krogan. Good ones that could benefit the entire galaxy.

Kyle Katarn wore his usual brown and tan outfit with the brown shoulder pad on the right side. When asked about it, he claimed it helped keep his aim when firing his blaster but Shepherd had never seen him even reach for the strange looking weapon that hung from his hip. The only thing he ever used was the blue lightsaber and the Force.

Pilot Ian Hawke wore a similar set of fatigues to Buck and Price. Shepherd had never seen the man without his helmet on and was surprised to see how young he looked. Even with his growing beard, the brown haired man looked no older than twenty to Shepherd. If that was true, he was deadliest twenty year old Shepherd knew.

Then, there was Commander Palmer. Shepherd had been so stupid the other night in the lounge. He had asked her if she wanted to come on board the \_Normandy\_ and she declined. He felt embarrassed but he shook his off. What was he thinking anyway? He couldn't fall for this girl from another universe. Besides, he has Liara. Even though she was too busy with Doctor Halsey in the Science Lab, he knew she was thinking of him. That made him feel guilty for making the mistake the other night.

"Alright," Palmer stated, "Here's what we know. We have to take control of the FIB. That is the only objective. Other secondary

objectives may pop up as the battle goes on, however. We need to plan the assault on the FIB. Ideas?"

"Full force attack from all sides." Wrex shouted out, "We overwhelm them before they could react."

"Problem with that is that we don't have too many men to do that. That plan leads to a lot of deaths that we can't afford." Palmer explained.

"Then, we make more!" the krogan slammed his fist down.

"Wrex, we're human. We don't have hundreds of years to train ourselves. We're all not expert war machines like the krogan." Shepherd told him and he relaxed.

"Hundreds of years?" asked the Arbiter, "What do you do with all that time?"

"Kill stuff, mostly."

'Vadam nodded at the krogan with approval, "Wrex brings up a good point. We hit them from all sides, we could get them unaware. All we need to do is hit them hard out of the gate."

"I'm guessing you have an idea?" Chief questioned.

He pointed at three locations surrounding the tower, "These are good strike points. We can surround them without spreading ourselves too thin. If they don't see us coming until we are already on top of them, we will have the tower in minutes. That's where you come in."

He flicked a finger at Pilot Hawke, "Who? Me?"

"I see what he's getting at." Garrus spoke up, "Three Titan drops at those locations."

"It's called Titanfall, Vakarian." Hawke corrected, "That makes sense. The problem is that I'm the only Pilot on the Birmingham. The rest of them were killed during the Spectre base mission six months ago and we didn't have the resources to train others."

"How fast could you train two people in controlling a Titan?" Palmer asked.

"Two days max, depending on the person." Hawke answered.

"We'll discuss that part later. We need to figure out how to land on the planet without our Pelicans getting nailed by AA fire."

"Really, Sarah, are you forgetting about the ODST?" Buck smirked, "We use ODST drop pods to land on the battlefield. There isn't an AA gun out there that could shoot one of them down."

"You're suggesting loading all our ground forces into ODST drop pods?" asked Price, "You know, they call them things metal coffins for a reason, right?"

"Got any other ideas?" Buck countered and the captain backed

off.

"We drop six teams of ODS'T soldiers and have them locate any AA guns. Once they are taken care of, we bring in the cavalry." Chief offered.

"I can drop a team of Sangheili special ops, as well." The Arbiter added.

"We could have our little spy ring point them out before we arrive and have the \_Normandy\_ take them out." Kyle Katarn stated, popping up Palmer's ears.

"That's not a bad idea. Rookie and Dutch are ODS'T so they have to be carrying some kind of transponders. They plant them on the AA guns and the \_Normandy\_ uses her stealth systems to take them out, one at a time. We won't even have to drop anyone from orbit." Palmer nodded, liking the idea.

Shepherd looked at Buck and could see that the gunnery sergeant was a little disappointed. He knew that Joker could handle something like this. He's the only pilot he would trust with it.

"To get things straight, Spy Team places transponders on any AA guns. The \_Normandy\_ takes them out. Pelicans deploy troops and vehicles at locations Alpha-One, Bravo-One, and Charlie-One. Titanfall at Alpha-Two, Bravo-Two, and Charlie-Two. Once we have the FIB, \_Bearclaw\_ will escort Doctor Halsey to the tower and Chief and his team will protect her while she attempts to fix the FIB." Palmer laid it all out for them to understand. Shepherd knew that the plan would have to have some on the spot fixing but it was a good one. He hoped that it was enough to get to the FIB.

They were dismissed to prepare themselves for the next few days.

**\*\*On the Training Deck\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Chief entered the training deck and was surprised to see so many people gathered around. All he wanted to do was getting some shooting in but the sound of the cheering caught his ears. Usually, he would ignore the sound and make his way for the shooting range but something stopped him. It might have been his curiosity.

In the boxing ring, a shirtless Soap MacTavish was going hand-to-hand with the bearded Pilot Hawke. Soap was bigger than Hawke and had a long reach but Hawke was moving around him like he was a ballroom dancer. Soap took a swing at Hawke's head and he ducked, delivering a decent uppercut counter. Soap dropped back and felt his jaw. He nodded and stepped out of the ring.

Before Hawke could set out, a new figure pulled the rope over his head and stepped in. Dressed in a pair of brown sweatpants and a tan tank top, Garrus Vakarian was ready for him. Hawke threw a sweaty punch at the turian but he was ready. He grappled the throw and knocked Hawke off his feet. Hawke wanted to get up and fight but he

knew that he was beaten.

The crowd cheered as Garrus rose his hands up in the air like he was saying, "I'm Garrus Vakarian and this is my favorite ring on the \_Infinity\_!"

The cheers died and Garrus turned around. His face looked surprised to see the Sangheili Arbiter, bare of his black armor, entering the ring, "You fight well, alien, but you are no match for me."

Garrus shrugged and readied himself. Chief watched as 'Vadam picked the turian up off the ground, raised him over his head, and tossed him out of the ring. He made the turian sniper look like a child's toy and he wasn't going to continue the challenge.

The ring shook as the next fighter stepped in. Chief watched the Arbiter turn to see the massive figure of Urdnot Wrex, "I am Wrex of Clan Urdnot. What is your name?"

"I am Thel 'Vadam of the State of Vadam." The Arbiter stated.

"I will take much pleasure in defeating you, then."

"Were it so easy." The krogan charged at the Sangheli but he dodged him. Wrex slammed into the blue rope that wrapped around the ring and pushed himself around. The Arbiter jabbed at the krogan's chest but his knuckles crackled. The krogan's skin was too tough for him.

Wrex gave the Arbiter a nice knock in the face and sent him to the floor. Wrex helped the Arbiter up and out of the ring. Chief didn't even notice that he had been standing next to Shepherd the whole time until he spoke, "It's amazing. A few weeks ago, I almost had to kill that krogan."

Chief looked at him and knew that Shepherd had history with every single member of his crew. He knew that losing one of them would break him.

Wrex placed one foot on the rope and raised his arms in the air, "No one can defeat the krogan!"

Chief stepped forward and the crowd parted a path for him to the ring. He didn't like mixing with the crew but something told him that he needed to do this. He needed to show them that he was everything that they heard. He didn't like to think about it but he was the Reclaimer, according to the Librarian. He needed to start acting like it.

He stepped into the ring and stopped at the far end of it. Looked up at the krogan battlemaster and nodded at him.

The krogan smirked at him and prepared himself for a charge. He dashed at the Spartan with all of his strength and yelled, "I am krogan!"

Chief ducked down at the last second and slammed his fist, hard, against the bottle of the krogan's jaw. Wrex lifted off the ground by a meter before landing on his back. He coughed a few times before he attempted to move. Before he could get up, Chief was already out of the ring and in the elevator. It was enough mingling for one

day.

**\*\*Don't forget about the poll. It is on my profile, now. I have some ideas on who should be in one but I want to leave that choice up to you. After all, Mass Effect is full of choices.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for taking the time to read this chapter. I'm already starting to work on the bad guy side of this story to answer some questions about how Saren managed to ally himself so quickly with the Covenant and the IMC and why he even is bothering with them in the first place.\*\***

## 10. Chapter 10: Preparations

**\*\*Here's the next chapter. Enjoy.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own my original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Ten: Preparations \*\***

**\*\*In the Titan Training Center\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC/M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Hawke looked over the five men that stood before him. All five of them have volunteered to be trained by him and he didn't want to let them down.

He wasn't use to being the teacher. He had played the role of the student for so long that he never thought that he would have to teach someone before. Now, he had five students that were eager to learn.

Prior to his death, MacAllen had trained him on the proper way to operate a Titan. He showed him IMC methods and how to make the Titan part of him. It had got to the point where Hawke felt more comfortable in a Titan on a battlefield than he did in the quietness of the Birmingham. He hated when they were drifting through space. He felt useless and pointless. It was a lot of the reason why they found so many Pilots hanging from their ceilings.

He was the last of his kind, just like Chief. Yeah, there are the IMC versions of him and there will be more of him to come but they weren't him and his team. He had served with his team for years. They were more than just his soldiers or comrades. They were his brothers and sisters and they were gone.

Standing before him, two of them would be replaced with people from different universes. He was sure that they would be able to handle the Titans, at least for one battle, but he wasn't sure if they deserved the right. A lot of good men and women died to fill the shoes that they are attempting. Was he dishonoring their memory by doing all this?

"No, you're not." Sarah had told him when he asked her a few hours ago. They had been lying with each for hours, just staring at each

other. They had been friends for so long that, when the romance sparked, he had felt all awkward and nervous. Now, they were better than they were before.

They were quiet for a few minutes before Hawke finally spoke, "I just don't want to fail them, Sarah."

"Ian, what did MacAllen tell you before he died?" she asked him with a straight face. Hawke couldn't answer. His mind replayed that moment dozens of times at night.

The fires burned as he raced into the reactor room. MacAllen sat on the ground with a knife in his shoulder blade. Blood poured from the wound as he knelt down next to him. He reached up and grabbed him arm and spoke.

"He told you to protect the Militia. He told you to bring us home and I know that you will." Hawke snapped back to reality. He nodded at her and smiled.

"Sarah, why are you so good to me?"

"Because, without you," she whispered for only him to hear, "this would all be pointless."

Hadn't not been for her, he would have never made it down to the TTC and met with his students. He looked at them and nodded, "Alright, let's see what you can do."

**\*\*In the Science Lab\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Liara hunched over a computer terminal, absorbing every single string of data she could. Her blue skin glowed from the computer's light. She had spent the last few days in the science lab, living off coffee and a human dish called pizza. She liked hers with fresh veggies on it.

She was so busy reading that she hadn't heard Doctor Halsey enter, "Enjoying yourself, Doctor T'soni?"

She jumped at the sound of her voice. She turned and smiled, "Goddess, Doctor Halsey, you startled me."

"I'm sorry about that." She had two cups of coffee in her hand, "I figured you needed a refill."

Liara took the cup and nodded, "Thank you, all this is so interesting. All my life, I was studying the Protheans, just like you studied the Forerunners. I think I might have found a connection between our researches."

"Shoot." The older human woman sipped her coffee and leaned against the lab table.

"The Protheans were destroyed by the Reapers 50,000 year ago. Sovereign told Shepherd that it was part of a cycle that occurs every

50,000 years, meaning that there had to be another race before the Protoheans. Are you following me?"

"Continue, Doctor." Halsey took another sip.

Liara realized that she was pacing around the room as she spoke, "All evidences points at another race before that race, and so on. My question for you, Doctor Halsey, is how far back do your Forerunners go?"

"We believe three million years." She said with confidence.

"Is it possible that they could have created the FIB and used it to travel between universes?"

"I sure hope so if you ever want to return home, Doctor T'soni, but I fail to see where you are getting at." She sat her coffee down.

"Just humor me for a moment. What if they used the FIB to travel to another universe and make it their own? Let's say my universe."

"You think that they started the cycle?"

"Maybe not started it, but took part in it. Maybe the Reapers wiped them out."

Halsey stopped her right there, "Impossible. The Forerunners were lightyears ahead of us in technology. If this Infinity can take out a Reaper, a Forerunner pistol could do so, too."

"Maybe, they were caught unaware and surprised. Maybe, they left some sort of evidence behind but we overlooked it because we didn't know what to look for. Halsey, this is a theory but you can't deny the relations between our galaxy and yours. Look at the Sangheili, they looked like a turian and a krogan had a deformed baby."

At that, Halsey laughed. She couldn't believe what the young asari had said to her, "Liara, I dare you to go tell the Arbiter that comparison."

"Catherine, I am serious about this. There could very much be Forerunner technology in my universe."

Halsey took a seat at one of the white desks. She placed her hand up to her chin and smirked, "What are you suggesting, T'soni?"

"I'm suggesting, when this is all over, you come with us. Let's find this technology together."

"The offer is an interesting one. The scientist in me wants to jump at the idea of a whole different universe but the old woman in me is telling me that my sense of adventure should be gone. I don't live as long as asari, Liara. My time is drawing near. Besides, who would be able to keep the Spartans and their armor in check? Sure, one of my students could handle the Spartan IV's but what about Chief? I couldn't do that to him." Was her answer and she wished to leave it at that, "Let's get back to work, Doctor."

Liara nodded with disappointment before turning back to her

terminal.

**\*\*In Master Chief's Private Quarters\*\***

**\*\*On the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Chief never felt right out of his armor. Since he was a little boy, he had always worn some sort of form of it. Even when he slept, he kept it on. The only time he removed his helmet was to eat and usually did that in the privacy of his quarters.

When he was transferred to the Infinity by Lasky's request, he was given the quarters for his duties for the UNSC. While he deserved the fancy room, he would have been happier in a cyro-tube or a closet. Under the armory commander's orders, he had to remove his armor for mandatory repairs. Usually, he would ignore him and make his own repairs but something told him to enjoy being out of the armor for a while.

He sat on a small office chair in front of a chrome desk. His computer terminal sat blank and an old fashioned analog clock ticked away next to it. A cup of cold coffee and a half eaten sandwich took up another portion of the table. Resting on little room he had left was Cortana's microchip. There was no way he was going to let her out of his sight, even for a suit repair.

The blue hologram of Cortana appeared over it, "You look good out of your suit, John."

"Thanks," he grunted.

"You're thinking." She crossed her arms and raised an eyebrow. It was a look she gave to him quite often so he was used to it.

"The Librarian on Requiem told me that I was a something millions of years in the making. She called me the Reclaimer. All during the Halo struggles, Guilty Spark had called humanity that but was he? Maybe, he was referring to me." Chief stated to Cortana.

"John, you and I both know that you were the only one that could stop Truth. You were the only one that could stop the Flood and the Rings. You were the only one that could stop the Didact." She said, "Wither you like it or not, you are the Reclaimer. The Librarian knows that and Spark knew that. I know that."

"I just don't know what that means. What is my duty as this 'Reclaimer'?"

Cortana shrugged, "I spent most of my time trying to figure that out for you. I can't. What do you think it is?"

Chief sat back and let out a deep breath, "Something is lost and I need to find it."

Cortana nodded, "That would be the most logical thought, yes."

"What if that something isn't even in this universe? What if it is in Shepherd's universe, or Hawke's? What if it's in Luke's galaxy? I



could spend the rest of my life searching and could never find it."

"But you will, John." She said, "Do you remember why I chose you? It wasn't for your strength or your skill. It was something that nobody else had. Luck. Whatever you decide, I have faith that you will find what you are looking forward and I will be right there with you."

Chief smirked at her, "Promise?"

"Promise." Chief stood up and grabbed his UNSC jacket and ballcap. Cortana looked up at him and asked, "Where are you going?"

"I need to talk to Shepherd." He grabbed her chip off the table and watched her disappear into his pocket.

He left his quarters and followed Cortana's directions to the hanger bay where the Normandy was docked. Chief had to admit that it was a nice looking ship. It was small for a frigate but Chief knew that was on purpose. In Shepherd's universe, it was one of the fastest ships in the galaxy and was virtually invisible on radar. It was the perfect ship for Shepherd.

He found him in the ship's bridge, which he called the Combat Information Center. He turned and asked, "Can I help you?"

"Shepherd, it's Chief." He grunted. He forgot that the other man had never seen him without his helmet on.

His eyes widened, "Chief, what do I owe the surprise?"

"We need to talk." Chief looked at the interested crew members, "In private."

Shepherd nodded and turned to his crew, "Excuse me for a moment."

He motioned for Chief to follow him down to the third deck, descending down a set of metal stairs. Chief was surprised on how dark the ship was. UNSC always seemed to be using all their power to keep their light fixtures running at full strength. He followed the commander through a med bay and into a small office, "Doctor Chakwas, we need to use your room."

"Go ahead, Commander." The doctor didn't even bother looking up from her notes. Shepherd opened the door and the two of them were alone.

"What do you need, Chief?" Shepherd asked.

"What is your plan after you get home?"

"Well, if we don't stop him here, to stop Saren from unleashing the Reapers. Why?"

"After all that, I mean. When your mission is complete, what are you planning on doing?"

"I don't know, Chief, probably whatever the Alliance wants from me."

That is, if they take us back." Shepherd added.

"What I am about to ask from you is to stay between the two of us until after the battle. Got it?"

"Sure, Chief."

"Good because, if the word gets out, I could be locked up for insanity." He paused for a moment, "I want to go to your universe."

"Are you crazy?" Cortana yelled from his pocket. He grabbed the chip and pulled out so he could see her, "You can't just leave our universe, Chief."

"You said it yourself, Cortana. We need to reclaim what is lost and what is lost could be in Shepherd's universe. I can feel it. I can't explain how but I can. You said that you would trust me no matter what."

"Chief, you have a home here. These people need you." Shepherd tried to reason with the Spartan but he waved him off.

"Four years, they thought I was dead. They replaced me with other Spartans that can do what I can do as a team. They don't need me here. They need me out there."

Everything was tense for a moment before Chief spoke again, "Shepherd, I need to go to your universe. I don't know if it is to help you stop the Reapers or to do something different but I know for a fact I need to go there. All I ask is to hitch a ride."

He looked down at Cortana, "I can't ask you to go with me."

"I don't care how crazy it is, Chief. You are stuck with me." She said, "That's a fact."

Chief nodded and looked back at the commander, "So what do you say?"

Shepherd turned away, "I could use your help against the Reapers and I'm sure you would be an asset to the team but I don't know. I don't know if I could take you away from your home. I might not be able to even bring you back."

"Those Cerberus ships had to come from somewhere." Chief explained, "Maybe the Mu Relay is sort of portal between our universes now."

"You have a point but I don't know if it is a good enough one. What about the UNSC, Chief?"

"It will be fine." He grunted, "I've seen what the Spartan IVs can do and I have faith in them. I need you to have faith in me."

Shepherd let out a deep breath, "Fine, but you need to talk to Lasky about it. I don't want to piss off an entire military force for stealing their MVP."

"Consider it done." Chief said, heading for the door.

"Hey, Chief," Shepherd called out and Chief turned around, "I'm looking forward to working with you."

"Likewise, Commander." Chief left, closing the door behind him.

**\*\*Near the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unknown Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Rookie and Dutch lay on the ground with their silenced rifles in front of them. They had spent the better part of the day marking down six different Anti-Air turrets. Most of them had been of Covenant design so they knew where to put the transponders to avoid detection. The AA gun that sat before them was not Covenant.

It was about six stories high with the actual turret on the top of the tower. It had a pair of turret barrels sticking out of a grey box-shaped base. Several white armored soldiers patrolled it. Rookie recalled Jaden calling them stormtroopers.

He counted seven troopers and one man dressed in a tan officer's uniform. He wore a small ball cap of the same color and carried a black blaster pistol on his hip. Rookie knew that he was the boss around these parts.

The star that the planet orbited was starting to go down, casting large shadows all over the forest. Rookie and Dutch moved quietly through the bushes until they found a spot that they could start advancing from.

"Alright, Rookie, you got this one." Dutch told his partner and Rookie looked up at him and pointed at himself, "Of course, you. You're the quieter one."

Rookie shook his head and wished he could tell Dutch to go do something to himself. Instead, he watched as two troopers disappeared around the other side of the tower. He made a mad dash for a pair of supply crates and hid behind them. Two other troopers rounded the corner but didn't notice him behind them. He waited for them to pass before moving to the tower.

He quickly pulled out a scanner device and placed it to the metal surface and ran back to his hiding spot. The third group of troopers appeared and didn't notice the small device hanging from the tower. Once they were gone, he retrieved his scanner and headed back to his spot.

He looked over the scanner and found that the turret had a shield around it. It would take a couple shots to take it out, giving it time to fire back. Even with their assault ship's stealth systems, it might take some hits. He didn't like that.

However, he did locate the perfect spot to place his transponder. However, it was inside the tower. He would have to get past the officer and the troopers. He retreated back to where he had left Dutch and tossed him the scanner.

"You got to be kidding me." He muttered under his breath, "How the hell are we to get inside there?"

Rookie bent down and drew out a map of the tower on the ground. He marked eight X's to represent the eight people they had to distract. He pointed to the X that stood for the officer and then at the forest in front of him. He pointed to Dutch and made a circle in the forest-area.

"I don't get what you want me to do?" Dutch honestly asked.

Rookie waved his arms in the air to show him and Dutch nodded, "You want me to make a distraction."

Rookie nodded and went back to his map. He drew arrows from a few of the X's towards Dutch's circle. He marked a triangle off to the side, which he pointed to himself to show it was him, and drew an arrow towards the tower. With the guards distracted, he could slip pass them and inside the tower.

"Now, how will you get out?" Dutch asked.

Rookie hadn't thought that far ahead. He didn't even know if he would alone in the tower. He just shook his head at Dutch and patted him on the shoulder. He etched in the ground, "We will worry about that later."

Dutch nodded, "Alright, let's get started."

It took fifteen minutes for Dutch to get into position. Once there, Rookie spotted him and gave him a thumbs-up sign. The other ODST nodded and started making all sorts of noise in the bushes. He rattled the green leaves around and waved his arms in the air. The Imperial officer grabbed one of his stormtroopers and yelled, "Go check it out."

Five of the troopers raced into the forest and Rookie hoped that Dutch was making a run for it. Two other troopers stood out of the forest edge while the officer stepped towards them, hand on his gun. Now was his window. Rookie bolted from the tree line and made it to the tower, undetected. He peered around the corner and noticed that they were still focusing on the forest. He wrapped around and hit the button for the door. To Rookie's luck, it opened and he slipped inside.

Once inside, he slowly moved onto the elevator that took up most of the tower. He hit the down button on the elevator and it made its way to the basement level. He was surprised to see how much the Imperials had built in such short of time.

The basement was empty except for a large computer terminal and a chair. Rookie took over the seat and started typing away at the keyboard. He plugged in a strange device that he was given a couple weeks ago from one of the IT techs. It was a computer virus of some kind that would adapt to any computer system and give you complete access, even from miles away.

He knew that the program would allow them to shut down the tower's shields prior to the assault, making it easier to destroy. Once the

virus was uploaded, he bent down and strapped the transponder to the bottom of the desk. It was the perfect spot at the heart of the tower for it.

Once he double checked to make sure everything was in order, he headed for the elevator. He pressed the up button and it begun to make its way back to the ground floor. The elevator stopped there and Rookie was surrounded by four stormtroopers and the Imperial officer.

"Rebel scum, always trying to be sneaky." The officer said, "We thought there might be one of you sneaking around the forest. Lady Ion will be very happy with me. Stun him."

Before Rookie could react, the stormtroopers dropped their weapons to the floor and the Imperial officer stood straight as an arrow. The door opened and he was surprised to see Jaden standing there with his two fingers up to his temple. With his free hand, he waved for Rookie to follow him. He pushed pass the troopers and officer and, together, they raced for the tree line.

After a few minutes of running, they stopped in a clearing. Jaden was breathing heavy, "That took a lot more than I thought it would."

Rookie nodded and wished he could thank the Jedi.

"You're welcome, Rookie." He said, looking up, "No, I can't read your mind but I can sense your emotions. No, they won't remember a thing before Dutch's distraction. That's the power of the Jedi mind trick."

Rookie nodded again and Dutch came out of the forest, "Did you do it?"

Rookie nodded a yes at him.

"Great, now, we wait, right?" Dutch asked.

"No, now, we rest." Jaden smiled and the trio headed off to find a good spot to camp for the night.

**\*\*The final battle is about to get underway. In case you can't guess it from this chapter, I will be writing a sequel where Chief goes with Shepherd into the Mass Effect universe and helps him through ME2 and ME3, along with his own personal mission.\*\***

**\*\*I will be posting the first few chapters of the bad guy's side of the story soon, as well.\*\***

**\*\*Don't forget to vote on who you would like see control a Titan. I'm looking for two people but I'm pretty sure I know who those two people will be.\*\***

**\*\*As always, thank you for reading and don't forget to give me some feedback.\*\***

**\*\*I'm sorry I haven't posted in a couple of days but, with work, my weekends are very busy and I don't have much time to write. The only benefit of this is that I get more ideas prior to writing.\*\***

**\*\*I hope you enjoy this chapter because the next one will be the first part of the Battle for the FIB.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Eleven: The Calm before the Storm\*\***

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky rubbed his chin stubble and placed his hands behind his back. They were one slipspace jump from the Forerunner world and Saren's fleet. According to Roland, the odds were in their favor but he wasn't so sure. Saren and his forces had been one step ahead of them all the way. Chi Ceti, the Covenant and IMC forces had been a surprise to them all. He still didn't understand how they had managed to join up so quickly and how they knew Halsey was there.

The Loyalist base was crawling with Imperial stormtroopers. When he had heard that, he had hoped that an entire Star Destroyer would have been there. It would have saved them from having to fight it now. He knew that the \_Shadow of Intent\_ would have no trouble taking it out. With dozens of other ships firing at them, he wasn't too sure anymore.

He knew he would have to focus his fire on Sovereign. Not because he was afraid that the Reaper would pose a challenge, however. He was afraid that it would escape into space, making it harder to stop him.

For Shepherd's universe's sake, he could not let that happen.

He straightened his uniform for the sixth time and looked around the bridge. He watched as his crewmen raced around the bridge, making some last minute adjustments. He made his way to his seat at the top of the bridge and sat down. He keyed the comms and called up Roland.

"What can I do for you, sir?" asked the WWII pilot avatar.

"A few last minute things. First, I want status reports on all ships under our command." He said and the AI disappeared for a few minutes, only to pop back up.

"Sir, the \_Mako\_-class corvettes, \_Bum Rush\_ and \_Two for Flinching\_, are showing all green and ready for launch. Same goes for the \_Gorgon\_-class destroyers, \_Gorgon\_, \_Medusa\_, \_Stheno\_, and \_Euryale\_, and the \_Marathon\_-class cruisers, \_Say My Name\_ and \_Mirata\_. However, the \_Halcyon\_-class cruisers', \_Dawn Under Heaven\_ and \_Morningstar\_, captains fear for their ships' ages. It seems that Lord Hood sent us his cheap labor." Roland stated, "I have yet to hear from the \_Birmingham\_, the \_Shadow of Intent\_, and 'Vadum's

corvettes."

"Keep trying and tell the \_Halcyon\_ captains that their ships are some of the toughest in the UNSC. It was a \_Halcyon\_ cruiser that blew up the first Halo and is one of the most famous ships in the fleet. I am honored to have them in my fleet." He told the AI.

The AI nodded, "R'tas 'Vadum refuses to speak with me and only wishes to speak with you, sir."

"Patch him through." He told him and Roland nodded.

On the viewscreen, the view of space turned to a vision of the Sangheili Shipmaster in gold armor. Lasky always had a hard time telling the difference between the different Sangheili but the Shipmaster was different. Even though he had the usual look over his brethren, he had lost two of his mandibles in an unknown fight several years ago," Admiral Lasky, you insult me by sending your computer to do your bidding."

"It was not on purpose, 'Vadum." Lasky told the Elite, "I told Roland to check in with all UNSC ships. I had full intent to speak with you, personally."

The other military leader nodded, "The \_Shadow of Intent\_ and her corvettes, the \_Truth's Lies\_ and the \_Psalm\_, are ready for battle but I do have an idea to catch them off guard."

"Shoot, Shipmaster." Lasky leaned back in his chair. He enjoyed 'Vadum's ideas.

"We will not be jumping at the same time as the rest of the fleet." He told Lasky.

"How come?"

"During the Human-Covenant War, we used this technique on Reach. 'Vadam came up with it to draw out your fire and surprise you. I believe your Hannibal did the same, Admiral."

"We go in, guns blazing, and when the enemy thinks they have the upper hand,"

"We jump in and save the day."

Lasky had thought about that. The enemy had no idea that the \_Shadow of Intent\_ was with them. He doubted that anybody survived the attack on the Loyalist base. If Cortana had never tapped into the \_Shadow\_'s comms, they would have had no idea that they were to attack the \_Regret\_ station. As far as Saren knew, the Loyalist base attack was just some bad luck. At least, that was what he was hoping for, "Alright, Shipmaster, we will do it your way but, the moment I need you, I want you in the system. You read me?"

"Like a book, Admiral. Anything else?"

"Be ready to jump on my orders."

"We're ready."

"Good, Lasky out." He cut the transmission and Roland confirmed that the Birmingham was ready, as well. He nodded, "Very well. How about what me and Engineer Gordon spoke about?"

"Action Virmire is in place and everything is in order. Task Force 141 is dealing with it personally, sir." Roland answered.

"Good, if things go south, I will need them ready." He told him.

"I'm not in charge but I think it is time for one of your speeches." Roland told the admiral.

He had a point, he thought to himself. There is a good portion of the crew that doesn't fully understand what they were doing. He needed to reassure them what they were doing was right. He had Roland open the comms of every crewmember across the fleet. In the metal hallways of every ship in his fleet, the sound of his voice would boom through for all to hear. Good thing he was good at speeches, "Attention, this is Admiral Thomas Lasky of the UNSC Infinity. We are preparing to make the jump into the FIB system where we will engage in combat with the enemy. For those of you that don't know, the enemy is both familiar and foreign to us all. The Covenant Loyalists have occupied a Forerunner world with a Forerunner base on it. This base has the technology to link our universe with other universes. From these universes, the Loyalists have gained the support of the geth, the Industrial Manufacturing Company, and the Imperial Remnant. Together, with the help of our new allies, we will push them out of our universe and get our friends home. That is what the UNSC is about. It is about protecting those that need our help and that means helping these folks get home."

He straightened himself again, "The enemy is strong but we are stronger. We will prevail. We will stop them. We just will have to work hard at it. Return to your duties. We launch in thirty minutes. Be ready and aim straight. Lasky out."

He pulled himself away from the consoles and headed for the hallway. He needed a break. He had been standing all that bridge all morning. He stepped into the hallway outside of the bridge, near the elevators, and leaned up against the bulkheads. He rested the back of his head on the cool metal.

"Thirsty?"

He jumped at the sound of her voice. He looked to see Captain Dare, dressed in her ONI uniform, holding two cups of coffee. He smiled, "Captain Dare, I thought we left you on Earth?"

"I arrived with the Two for Flinching last night. Lord Hood wanted me elsewhere but I don't answer to him." She handed him the black liquid in the Styrofoam cup. He sipped it and frowned, "Sorry, I didn't have any cream."

"It's okay, Dare, walk with me." He waved for her to follow him into his private office. On the small brown desk next to his larger desk was a small, old-fashioned coffee machine with sugar packets and creamers. He grabbed four pink packets out of the small container, opened them, and poured them into the cup. He followed with a splash and a half of cream and stirred it into a light brown color. He



pointed at it for Dare to use but she shook him off.

"I prefer to have some coffee with my sugar, Admiral." She told him.

He sipped the cup again and smiled. A lot better, he thought, "Captain, I am assuming you didn't come all this way for a coffee date."

She smiled, "No, Admiral, but I did have a nice dinner with Ed last night."

"How are you, two, anyway?"

"As good as an ODSST soldier and an ONI officer could be." She said, taking a seat, "Now, for the real reason I am up here. I want to go on the ground."

"After the battle?" he asked, "I was figuring you would want to poke ONI's nose through our findings."

"No, not after the battle, sir. I want to go with the ground troops during the battle." She told him with a straight face.

He chuckled, "Look, Veronica, I read your file. Your last combat mission, while it was successful, you spent most of it M.I.A. and I don't like how ONI keeps secrets."

"I understand your concerns, Admiral, but my superiors want a firsthand account of the FIB from one of their own officers."

"They can have the account from Chief's helmet cam." He told her but he could tell she wasn't happy about that.

"No, Admiral, you and I both know that won't be enough to please them. I want my boots on the ground and you could use the extra hand. What do you have to loss?"

"No secret missions? No strings attached?"

She shook her head, "My only request is to drop with Buck's ODSST."

"The ODSST are not dropping. They are going down via Pelican." He told her.

"No, they are dropping, sir. That is my request. I want Buck's unit and me to drop in and attack from a fourth position. While the main forces draw the enemy fire, we could hit them from their flanks. Buck also wants to connect with his lost men. He has the rights to do so, sir."

Admiral Lasky pushed back his hair. He was in need of a haircut. He still couldn't believe he hadn't cut before his meeting with Lord Hood. It might have been the reason he sent him the dinosaur ships that he did. He let out a deep breath, "Tell Buck I'm granting this drop but I want him in contact with Commander Palmer at all times. She is running the show down there, Dare, not you. Do you understand me, Captain?"

"I understand you, sir." She stood up, "I will talk to Gunnery Sergeant Buck at once and will have his team ready themselves on the \_Say My Name\_ for orbital drop."

"Negative, Captain. Send him to the \_Birmingham\_. It has been fitted for orbital drops and will be the main ground assault ship."

"Yes, Admiral, we will head over at once and make contact with Vice Admiral Graves."

"It is Captain Graves, Dare. He joined the UNSC so his ship would be fitted with slipspace drives and ODST pods and so we can make use of her Titans." He explained, "I will alert Graves of your reassignment at once. Thanks for the coffee, Dare, but you are dismissed."

"Thank you, Admiral." She saluted and stepped out of the office. He sat there for a few moments, sipping on his coffee. He knew that this was the calm before the storm. This would be the last time he would get to sit down and enjoy a cup of coffee for a while. He didn't know how long the battle would last but he was prepared to fight for days. His adrenaline began to rise as he thought about it.

He took another drink of his coffee and leaned back in the small office chair he allowed himself. He could have closed his eyes and fell asleep for the rest of the twenty minutes but Roland appeared on his desk, "Admiral, I am sorry to interrupt but Grand Master Skywalker wishes to speak with you in Hanger Bay 17C for a last minute combat talk."

He didn't answer for a while. He hoped he had imagined the orange AI. Roland spoke up again, "Sir, should I tell him you won't be meeting with him?"

He shook his head, "I'll be there in a minute."

"I will let him know, sir." The AI disappeared and Lasky forced himself out of the seat. He grabbed the cup of the desk and gulped down the last bit of it. The small coffee grinds hit the back of his throat and the soul taste made him smile. He always loved that part of drinking coffee. While drinking it, a person felt like he could tackle anything. Once he gets to the bottom, he realizes that his day was going to be bad but it didn't matter. He had his coffee today.

He turned and headed out the metal door. He found his way to the elevator and took it to the hanger bay that Roland had told him that he would find Luke. Just as Roland said, he found the Jedi Grand Master in the hanger next to the strange ship that he flew when they found him at the FIB. He called it an X-wing but it didn't look anything like an X to Lasky. It had a long nose with the cockpit at the back end of it. Behind the cockpit, the small, blue robot that Luke had brought with him was plugged into the ship. The droid whistled as it moved its head around in circles. The four engine coils came out behind it and the wings spanned out from the sides of it. The wings had two laser turrets on them, one on the top and the bottom, making four total laser turrets. At the end of the nose, two small slits showed that it could launch some kind of torpedo out of them.

The pilot was running through a data pad as the droid whistled down

at him, "Artoo, don't make any changes to my settings. I have them that way for a reason. You know this."

The droid whistled again and turned its head away from the Jedi. Luke turned to see Admiral Lasky and smiled, "Admiral, you got down her quickly."

"It sounded urgent." He told the pilot. Luke wore an orange jumpsuit with a pair of white boots and gloves. On his chest, a small desk board was attached to the jumpsuit and Lasky assumed it controlled the suits atmospheric settings. Tucked under his left arm, a white helmet with an orange visor stared at him. The helmet was decorated with decals that Lasky knew meant something in his galaxy.

"Not too urgent but I do have a suggestion."

"Good ahead, Grand Master."

"Please, Lasky, it's Luke or Skywalker to you. You are not from our galaxy. You need not to hide behind its politics. We are two soldiers of war and we will fight and talk that way." Luke smiled, "I want a squadron of your best pilots."

"For what, may I ask?"

"A strike mission on the Imperial Star Destroyers. I've been working on an idea that could knock out their shields, leaving them open for attack." He explained.

"I will forward Apollo squadron to your command at once." He said to Luke's surprise.

"Just like that?" he questioned.

"Just like that." Lasky said, "I trust you, Luke. Apollo squadron contains some of the best Broadsword pilots I got. They will do what you ask to the letter."

"How many?" he asked.

"Ten and you. Maybe you can contact the Arbiter and see if you get him to add to your team but that is all I can spare." He told the Jedi, truthfully.

"Thank you, Admiral. This means a lot. You won't regret it."

"I know I won't." Lasky said, turning for the elevator.

**\*\*In Hanger Bay Two\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC/M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Hawke was surprised to see the ODST he met at the FIB landing in his hanger bay. While he had only worked with them once, he had a little respect for them. He was given videos on how they are trained and how they are shot from orbit. It reminded him of the first time he jumped in a Titan.

He was fifteen and it was six months after the IMC started taking in workers. His father was a metal miner in one of the colonies. He was good at what he did and that caught the eye of the IMC. He was arrested by them and forced into working for them. His first mission with the Militia was to raid the "slave" camp where he was being held.

He remembered stilling in the cockpit of his first Titan. The Titan looked like it was held together with sticks, glue, and dreams. He wrapped his hands around the metal handles around the cockpit and looked up. Standing in the opening was James MacAllen himself.

It was the first time he saw the legendary man since he joined the Militia. MacAllen was known as the de facto leader of the M-COR and used his former IMC training to train Pilots into highly trained killing machines. He looked down at him and said, "Is this your first jump, Pilot?"

"Yes, sir." Hawke barked up at him.

MacAllen bent down and smiled, "Look, my first Titanfall landed me in a dense swamp where the mud came up to my Titan's knees. When I was launched down, I threw up in my helmet so much that I had to set the Titan to auto and had it carry me the whole trip. Trust me, nothing is worse than that."

"Thank you, sir."

"What's your name, kid?"

"Hawke. Ian Hawke, sir."

"Well, have a nice fall, Ian Hawke." He said, slamming the red button next to the Titan. Before Hawke knew it, the Titan shot out of the ship like a missile and broke through the atmosphere.

He knew that the ODST and he were a lot alike. He respected them and he could tell they respected him. That's what made him happy to see them. The person he wasn't happy to see was the female officer that accompanied them.

She was of standard height with blond hair. She hung pretty close to Buck, showing that they knew each other well. She wore a light blue set of armor and kept her pointed helmet under his left arm. She seemed to be leading them in his direction.

He looked behind him and was surprised to see Captain Graves standing behind him. He jumped to attention, "Captain."

"At ease, Pilot." He stated, "I just wanted to warn you about our new jumpers. The ODST are dropping in a fourth location to flank the enemy."

"I thought the only things we're dropping are the Titans?" Hawke questioned.

"So did I. Apparently, the UNSC install some ODST droppers when they added the slipspace. Not saying I'm mad about that, I just would have liked to have known about it."

"Understandable, sir."

The woman and her ODST stopped a few meters from them. She saluted, "Captain Veronica Dare reporting, sir."

"Good to see you, again, Captain. I do got to say that the armor looks better than the uniform." He joked.

"Can you point us in the direction of our pods?" she asked, brushing off the captain's remark like it was a patch of dust.

"Deck four, section six." Graves told her, not missing a beat, and looked at Hawke, "Mind showing them?"

"Not at all, sir." Hawke nodded and turned back to the UNSC soldiers, "Follow me."

The only ones that followed were Dare and Buck. Mickey, Romeo, and four other ODST soldiers wandered off to find something to do with themselves. The three of them headed for the elevator and Hawke pressed the number four button.

He was so glad that the Birmingham was back to her full strength. While he enjoyed the workout, the stair was a pain for him to have to walk up and down fifteen billion times a day, "So Lasky's letting you drop?"

Buck nodded, "It took some convincing but, if anyone could get it done, it's Veronica."

Dare shot him a look, "Take it easy, Ed. You don't need to suck up it me."

"I'm guessing you guys know each other?" Hawke asked them.

"Not at all." The elevator stopped at Dare pushed on. Hawke looked at her in confusion. The way she had said it was so cold that Hawke had to brush some of the ice off his armor.

He turned and looked at Buck, "What's up with her?"

"Watch yourself, Hawke." Buck smiled, "That's my fiancÃ© you're talking about."

That made sense, he thought to himself as he lead them to the pods, "Well, here we are. Looks like your brass used some of our old Titan pods to make your ODST ports. Should be plenty of room for you in them."

Buck stepped inside one of the bell shaped pods and sat down in the chair, "Hmm, roomy."

Dare shook her head at him, "Come on, let's get these checks done. We hit slipspace in fifteen minutes."

"Fifteen minutes? I have to go check on my Titans. Just take the elevator when you two are done." Hawke turned and left them behind in the pods. He headed for the elevator and took it to the Titan deck, deck five. He made his way to his Atlas Titan and was surprised to see Commander Shepherd, in full armor, checking out one of the

Titans, "You ready for the drop?"

Shepherd nodded without looking away, "You could say that. I've never been dropped from space before."

"It's not too bad." Hawke told him, "My first mission, I was dropped into the middle of an IMC worker camp and threw up the whole way down."

"Really?" No, he didn't. He told Shepherd the same thing that MacAllen had told him.

His mind flashed back to the burning Demeter refueling station. He left MacAllen's side and was making his way for the door when the man called out, "Hey, Ian, by the way, I never threw up once in my Titan!"

"Really. You will be fine, Shepherd. The Chief isn't worried so you shouldn't be." He told the commander and he nodded.

"Hey, Hawke, Chief and I were talkingâ€|" he was cut off by the intercom system.

"Sorry, Commander, you will have to tell me when it's over. You need to get in your Titan. Have a nice fall," Hawke, slammed Shepherd on the right shoulder blade, and turned to see Master Chief walking into the chamber, "Chief, get into your Ogre. Dropping in T-minus ten minutes."

He bolted past the Spartan and jumped into his Atlas. He keyed some of the controls to life. Once everything was in order, he whispered, "It's showtime."

**\*\*Thank you so much for taking the time to read this chapter. The polls are in and Chief and Shepherd will fighting from some Titans. I'm so excited to write this next part and more excited for you to read it.\*\***

**\*\*Don't forget to give me some feedback!\*\***

## 12. Chapter 12: The Battle for the FIB

**\*\*Here it is. The first part of the Battle for the FIB. Enjoy.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Twelve: The Battle for the FIB Part I\*\***

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"Admiral, the clock is down." Roland told Lasky, "Waiting your orders, sir."

Without looking at the AI, Lasky spoke, "Do it."

The purple wormhole appeared in front of the fleet and, one by one, the ships entered. They warped through slipspace for almost fifteen minutes until they came out over the green planet that housed the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge. In front of them, Lasky counted the ships before him. Nineteen different ships, varying in sizes, stood between them and the planet. They were just out of range.

"Roland, scan for Sovereign." He ordered.

"I did, sir." He responded, "The Reaper ship is not in system."

Why, he thought. Why wouldn't it be here? Was it trying to catch them off guard? Did it know it was the primary target? He shook it off, "Keep scanning. Get those ships in range. Open up a fleet chat line between me and all captains."

"Roger that, sir." The AI disappeared, leaving Lasky to give his orders.

"\_Bum Rush, Gorgon, \_and \_Dawn Under Heaven\_, target those geth capital ships. \_Medusa, Stheno, \_and \_Mirata\_, hit those \_Fury\_-classers with whatever you got. \_Say My Name \_and \_Morningstar\_, get on those SD's. \_Euryale,\_ cut a hole for the \_Birmingham\_." He ordered into his comm link and the battle started.

The only two ships he left out of the orders were two \_Mako\_-class corvettes. The two ships had been the last to arrive, just moments before the slipspace jump.

The corvettes flanked the \_Infinity\_, awaiting orders.

Lasky watched the battle that took place before him. So far, the \_Infinity\_ hung on the outskirts of the battle. He wanted to keep his full strength a secret as long as possible. The \_Gorgon\_ engaged a geth capital ship with its MAC gun. The projectile smashed into the side of the geth ship, causing it to limp to its side. The \_Gorgon\_ finished the job with a few missiles and the ship was down.

One down, eighteen to go, he thought.

With the geth ship out of the way, the \_Birmingham\_ begun to make a move for the planet. Flanked by the \_Euryale\_ to its port side, the M-COR ship pushed passed the battle. A team of Space Banshees came swooping down, throwing green missiles at the \_Birmingham\_.

"This is Graves, here." The \_Birmingham\_'s captain yelled, "I got enemy fighters attempting to take out my shields."

Lasky rolled through his list of squadrons and located the closest one, "Athena Squadron, cover the \_Birmingham\_."

"Yes, sir." The squadron leader bellowed in.

Lasky watched the holographic battle playing out before him on the table. Twelve Broadwords came to the \_Birmingham\_'s rescue. They ducked in and out from under the ship, taking out a Banshee with every dive.

"This is Athena One, all targets are down. You are clear to move, \_Birmingham\_." The pilot told them.

"Thanks, Athena." Lasky said, "Can you cover them all the way to the planet?"

"Can do, sir."

That solved that problem, he smirked. He rolled back to the other end of the battle and noticed that the Loyalist destroyer was making a move on the \_Say My Name\_ and \_Morningstar\_. The two ships were focusing all their fire on the Star Destroyers that they didn't notice the large Covenant ship moving in on them.

"Be aware, \_Say My Name\_, Morningstar, you got that \_CAS\_ hunting for you." He told them.

"Where?" the \_Morningstar\_'s captain, John Keller, responded.

"Aft side."

"I see it." Keller stated but his voice was muffled by an explosion. The Covenant ship fired an energy beam straight at the \_Halcyon\_. Lasky was glad to see that the ship had survived the direct hit but frowned at the amount of shielding it cost. The \_Morningstar\_ wouldn't survive another hit like that.

"This Apollo Leader to \_Infinity\_, I'm engaging the \_CAS\_." Luke's voice came through and Lasky was glad to see the Jedi's squadron zooming in the ship's direction. He knew that they wouldn't be able to destroy it but it would draw its fire from the \_Morningstar\_.

"This is the \_Morningstar\_," Keller's voice came through, "time to punch back."

From the tip of the \_Morningstar\_'s MAC, a light blue projectile shot out and smashed into the front of the \_CAS\_, dropping down its shields. The \_CAS\_ opened a slipspace jump and zipped inside, appearing on the other side of the battle.

Lasky cursed under his breath. They had the strongest ship in their fleet on the ropes and it got away. He shook it off. He knew he could spare any ship for the attack on the \_CAS\_ so he made the order, "Roland, bring us into combat with that Covenant destroyer."

"Yes, sir."

"Once in range, hit it with the all four MACs."

"All four, sir?"

"Did I stutter? I want that thing to be a pile of purple spare parts when we are done."

The \_Infinity\_ and her two corvette escorts headed for the \_CAS\_'s position. As she moved, Lasky called out more orders to the other ships. He was glad to see that three geth ships were down and one of the \_Fury\_-class ships was badly damaged. The battle was going good. Too good, he thought to himself.



"Sir, we're in range."

"Fire all four MACs, now." He yelled and watched the blue shots hit the Covenant ship. He smiled as it broke into thousands of purple pieces and clouds of debris. He heard cheers all around from his crew but he knew the battle wasn't over. It was only getting started.

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of Luke's X-wing\*\***

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Luke pulled his X-wing out of a tight spin and fired his red laser into the Covenant Seraph, blowing it into dozens of pieces. To him, the Seraphs looking like a creature he saw on his first visit to Naboo, the birth planet of his mother. It had a disk like front and a long, skinny tail on the back. To his surprise, it was remarkable fast and the pilots put its tough shields to good use by playing chicken with him.

The Seraph would line up with him and head for a head-on collision. At the last second, one of them would dive or spin out of the way. Most of the time, it was him.

The shields of the Seraphs were tougher than he expected. He was used to blowing up TIE fighters, which littered the battlespace as well. The TIEs had little to no shields, just like the geth fighters. The Seraphs and the Cerberus starfighters were the only real threat in the space around him.

As luck would have it, Luke's Broadsword squadron mates were expects at killing Seraphs. He watched as one of them launched a missile at one while a second one hit it with his machine gun. The dual attacks turned the Seraph into a blank space.

His laser did the job but it required a proton torpedo first. He was running low of torps. He had to save them for his run against the Star Destroyers. He spun his X-wing around, "Apollo, focus on those Seraphs. I'll take out eyeballs and bugs."

When he said "eyeballs and bugs", he was referring to the TIE fighters and the geth starfighter, respectably. \_Once a fighter jockey, always a fighter jockey\_—his friend and former wingman, Wedge Antilles, once told him. He smiled at the thought of his old friend and turned his focus on a trio of TIEs.

He had Artoo lock onto them so he could keep an eye on them. They shot green lasers at his fighter but he forced it into a barrel roll, dodging the shots. While spinning, he fired his red lasers at the TIEs. He hit one on its right flank, causing it to spin into another. The two busted into a ball of red fire. He finished the third one with a quad fire to the eyeball.

He scanned the battlespace and found that they had the upper hand. The enemy fleet had already lost six ships, including the Covenant

destroyer that everyone was worried about. He noticed that the Star Destroyers were giving the fleet the most trouble, "Apollo, on me. It's time to see what you can do."

His squadron formed up on him and he raced for the closest Star Destroyer, "One Flight, let's hit this one. Two and Three Flight, hit the other two."

His flight contained only three fighters while the other two had four. He had hoped that the Separatist would spare a single fighter to round out his squadron but they failed to even answer his messages. No matter, he knew he could handle it.

The three of them flew in formation towards the Imperial Star Destroyer. Luke spun his fighter upside down and rode along the belly of the dagger shaped ship. During his time with the Rebellion, Luke had the chance to visit dozens of Imperial Star Destroyers. If he remembered correctly, the shield generator is located towards the center of the ship, in the lower decks. Artoo whistled to tell him that he was in the right spot and he stopped his X-wing. He double checked to see if his helmet and other equipment were on before unlocking the cockpit door. The door popped up and he unclipped his safety harness. He floated up and out of the X-wing. He placed his hand on the metal exterior of the Star Destroyer as his wingmen kept him covered.

Two years, he thought about this moment. He had thought up of a way to destroy a Star Destroyer's shields and the answer came to him one night in a dream. He recalled his time on Hoth where he used his lightsaber to cut open the bottom of an AT-AT and tossed an explosive in it. The same idea came to the Star Destroyer.

The way a Star Destroyer's shields worked was to protect it from enemy fire. They would hold off just about anything, including a shot from a MAC gun. Luke realized that the shields meant nothing to his lightsaber.

He thumbed the blade to life and it glowed a green color in the void of space. He jammed the saber into the ship and begun to carve his way through. To his surprise, it worked. He cut through the layers of metal and, soon, he had a hole directly into the ship.

He reached for the small device on his belt and pushed it up through the hole. The small device floated through it, pushing pass the pressure the hole created. It latched itself to the side of the ship and made its way inside.

Luke headed back to his fighter and checked in, "Two and Three, status."

"Success, Apollo One," one of them responded, "device is away."

"Artoo, do what you do."

The blue droid whistled as Luke darted away from the ship. He watched the small camera that was attached to the device as it moved through the ship. It bypassed its way into the shield generator room, planted itself on the large generator, and exploded.

Luke scanned the Star Destroyer and wanted to jump in celebration, "Admiral, the SDs' shields are down. I say again, shields are down."

"Roger that, Apollo." Lasky answered, "Stand back."

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky ordered his two \_Mako\_-class corvettes, the \_Coral Sea\_ and the \_Callisto\_, to follow the \_Infinity\_ into the conflict with the Imperial Star Destroyers. He charged up a MAC fire and the blue projectile shot right through the first one. The destroyer limped to its side as thousands of escape pods shot out of the sides.

The remaining two SDs moved into a new position and something caught Lasky's eye. One of the Star Destroyers dropped a strange looking cannon from its nose. The cannon looked like a giant disk and five lasers shot out, meeting in the middle. The green lasers formed one massive energy shot, aiming for the \_Coral Sea\_.

"Captain, move your ship." He barked but it was too late. The green laser shot at the \_Coral Sea\_, shooting right through her shields and into the bridge. With the bridge gone, so was the captain. Lasky sounded the abandon ship protocol from his position on the \_Infinity\_.

With the loss of the \_Coral Sea\_Â, Lasky charged all four of his MAC guns, aiming two shots each at the unshielded destroyers. The other destroyer dropped its own cannon and charged up the shot, "Roland, how charged are the cannons?"

"Cannons one through three, eighty-eight percent. Cannon four is at forty, sir." He shook his head.

"Fire Cannon one and two at the attacking ship." He ordered.

Two weaker, but still powerful, MAC shots fired from the \_Infinity\_'s nose and they pounded into the side of the destroyer. Seconds before the impact, the destroyer managed to get a shot off with its laser. The green beam hit the starboard side of the \_Infinity\_, dropping her shields to less than fifty percent.

Even though they got hit, the destroyer was out for the count. He focused his attention back to the other one where the \_Callisto\_ was keeping it busy. Lasky had the \_Infinity\_ wheel around so her cannons were aimed at the Star Destroyer. He fired his cannons at the same time the destroyer fired its second laser shot.

His MAC gun shots destroyed the Imperial ship but at a cost. He looked at the view screen to see that the \_Callisto\_ was no more. He pounded on the table but he had to stay focused, "Roland, get us back to the battle."

"Aye, sir." He said, "Sir, I got unknown enemy ships moving into the

system."

"Hostile?"

"Maybe," he said, "and Sovereign is with them."

"How many ships?"

"Four and Sovereign. I think they are Covenant."

"What?" To confirm Roland's statement, five ships dropped out of slipspace. Four of the ships were Covenant \_CAS\_-class destroyers. In their tow, the Reaper Sovereign detached itself and moved away from the incoming fleet. It was making its way for the planet below to pick on a ship they knew it could destroy. The \_Birmingham\_.

"Sir, orders?" Roland asked.

"Any ships close enough to Sovereign?"

"Negative, they are all in combat with the \_Fury\_-class ships and some geth capital ships. I don't know who designed those \_Fury\_ ships but they are built to last." Roland explained.

"Is the \_Euryale\_ still with the \_Birmingham\_?"

"Yes, but she won't fair well against the \_CAS\_-class ship following Sovereign."

"Dammit." He whispered. He needed a plan and he needed one fast. He looked at his list of command and hatched an idea, "Roland, move us in position to fight those \_CAS\_-class ships. Get me a line to 'Vadum and his ships."

The view screen turned to one of 'Vadum, hanging just out of the system, "Shipmaster, it's time. Jump at these locations. We got four \_CAS\_-class destroyers that joined the party."

"Be there in a moment." The Sangheili Shipmaster sounded and cut the transmission.

"What about the \_CAS\_ heading for the \_Birmingham\_, sir?" Roland asked.

"Get me a line to Captain Price. I might have to use our little insurance policy early."

"Yes, sir." The AI sounded as the \_Infinity\_ moved to fight off the three \_CAS\_-classers.

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner world\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Joker shot the \_Normandy\_ out of the hanger bay of the \_Birmingham\_. It felt damn good to fly again. After being freed from his grounding

on the Citadel, he was grounded again by the UNSC. Now, he was back in business and was planning to make a show out of it.

He glided over the forest, virtually undetected, "These stealth systems make it too easy."

"Just focus on those towers, Joker." Pressly told him and Joker shrugged him off.

"Yeah, yeah, I got it." The first tower was coming up. He locked onto the large purple AA gun and fired. It erupted into a cloud of purple smoke, "One down, five to go."

He repeated the process until he got the Imperial style AA. He scanned it and was surprised to see how strong its shielding was. It turned in the \_Normandy\_'s direction and fired.

"How can it see us?" Pressly barked.

"Because it's being fired manually." Joker said, "Who does that anymore?"

He spun the \_Normandy\_, dodging the red laser shots. He took her up and around it, coming in from the top. The odd part was that the tower's shields were now down. He fired and caused it to explode before it got another shot off, "That was weird."

"Maybe we have a guardian angel, Joker." Pressly joked with the pilot.

"Ah, all jokes aside, Press, but I'm getting a strange signal from the FIB." He turned the ship around, pointing it in the direction of the Forerunner tower. Surrounding the tower, a large energy shield came up and completely covered the FIB. He watched several geth transport ships pass through it inside but he had a feeling that he wouldn't be able to head into it. There was only one way to find out.

He darted for the FIB and unleashed everything he had at it. The shield shimmered but nothing more. He pulled the \_Normandy\_ up from her suicide run and raced over the shield until she reached the top. There was no way to break it.

He cursed under his breath. He was wasting his time. He could have been shooting down geth transport ships. He spun his ship around but it was too late. The ground battle was about to begin.

**\*\*Drop Off Zone Alpha\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Dressed in a black UNSC combat suit, Han Solo jumped off the back of the Pelican. Next to him, wearing only his brown belt and bowcaster, was Chewbacca. Han felt odd wearing the UNSC outfit instead of New Republic orange. To make it feel more like home, he painted the Republic symbol of a red circle with three spikes at the top on his right shoulder pad.

He carried an assault rifle and his blaster pistol on his hip. He kept a combat knife on his boot, in case he has a close encounter with a Sangheili Elite.

He spotted Kyle and raced towards him, "Where we heading?"

"North." The Jedi said. He wore a similar set of UNSC armor but he decided against the helmet. He kept his blue, one-eyed visor over his right eye. Han was starting to think he really enjoyed the added advantages it gave, "Geth drop ships just unloaded teams of geth and stormtroopers. We need to push pass them if we want to get to the FIB."

"Right." Han nodded and they followed the rest of the soldiers up the hill. Once at the top, they had to take cover from some geth fire. He popped up and took out three flashlights with one volley.

Chewy fiddled with something in his hands. Han looked to see what he was up to and realized that he was holding a terminal detonator, "Where the hell did you get that?"

The Wookiee smiled and armed it. He tossed it in the direction of a team of geth rocket troopers and they exploded into dozens of pieces.

"Move up!" Commander Palmer yelled and the teams of soldiers begun to follow suit. The Spartan IV darted out in front with an assault rifle in her right hand and a magnum in the other. She rolled to dodge some red lasers and came up on one knee. She fired a few shots from the magnum into the heads of some stormtroopers and unleashed a volley of fire from her rifle into some geth. She forced herself up, holstering the pistol, and dashed for cover.

Following in her wake was Shepherd's lieutenant, Kaidan Alenko. Han remembered him from the dozen different meetings they had to have in the beginning of all this. He thought about it like it was years ago but really it was only a couple of weeks.

The young lieutenant fired his Avenger assault rifle at some nearby geth troopers as several geth shots bounced off his blue biotic field that surrounded his body. He unleashed a wave of blue dark energy at some advancing stormtroopers, picking them off of the ground and slamming them back to the planet's surface. Han wished he had that kind of ability.

Han followed Palmer's lead and they managed to fight their way to a patch of flatland. They took cover behind some down ships and debris from the enemy. He heard the familiar sound of an AT-ST moving through the forest.

Three of them broke through the tree line and fired upon the covered the soldiers. Red lasers tore through battle lines, scrabbling ranks. Palmer attempted to shout out orders but it couldn't be heard over the sound the Chicken Walkers were making.

Han looked to his Wookiee partner, "Endor?"

The Wookiee bellowed in agreement as the two broke cover and made for the nearest AT-ST. Han grabbed the rappel gun from his hip and fired up at the top of the walker. He looked to make sure Chewy was doing

the same.

The two of them shot up to the top of AT-ST and climbed inside. Han used his knife to take out the drive while Chewbacca grabbed the co-pilot by one of his arms and ripped him clean out of it. The Imperial man landed with a splat on the ground.

Han and Chewy ran through the controls and moved the walker towards the enemy walkers. They fired at the center base where the head met the legs, causing it to explode. He did the same for the third one.

He radioed down to Palmer, "You like our new ride?"

"What the hell are you, Solo? A Spartan?" the commander yelled up, "How well can you work that thing?"

"Well enough." He answered.

"Good, cut us a path." She stated.

Han wheeled the AT-ST around. Static came over the radio, followed by a voice, "Don't let them break through!"

Han pulled out his blaster and fired into the comms, "He had a boring voice anyway."

The Wookiee shook his head as he ran through the controls. Together, they moved the walker through the forest with Palmer and her units behind them. They broke deeper into the forest, still several kilometers from the FIB tower. They were met by some Imperial stormtroopers but they shot them out of the trees like they were nothing.

They were attacked by some more AT-STs. Han fired some red lasers into the closest one, causing it to explode. They took over three more before he spotted something out of the corner of his eye.

From the cover of a down tree, a Sangheili Loyalist popped out of cover. In his alien hand, a blue fuzz seemed to be in it. He threw the fuzz in Han and Chewy's direction. The fuzz stuck to the walker's right leg and Han knew what was about to happen. He didn't have time to make a jump for it. The plasma grenade exploded and the right leg was gone.

With no support, the walker wobbled a few times before falling to its right side. Upon impact, the lights went deep and the chamber was casted in darkness. Han thought he was dead. He found that he had landed on Chewbacca and made sure the Wookiee was okay.

Static came through his comms, "Solo, are you there?"

It was Palmer, "Yeah, we're okay. Coming out, now."

Han grabbed his gun and opened the top hatch with his left hand. Several plasma shots hit the metal door, forcing him to pull it shut. The hatch opened out to a squad of Sangheili and stormtroopers. He took one step outside, he was toast, "Nevermind, I think we will just stay in here."

"That's a negative, General." Palmer said, "Alenko and I will get you out of there."

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Kyle blocked a set of red lasers, sending them back in the direction they had come. He stood out of cover, knowing that all he needed was his lightsaber to protect him. Alenko and Palmer took cover to his right behind a destroyed AT-ST while a team of UNSC marines were stuck on his left.

He had watched as his friends' walker fell to the ground. He could sense that they were alright but he knew that they were stuck in there until he could get to them, "Alenko, I need your help."

"With what?"

"That biotic charge you do, can you make someone else do it?" he asked and Alenko nodded.

"Sure, just say when."

Kyle looked at him after a few seconds, "Now."

He darted forward, using the Force to guide him. The extra boost he got from Alenko's biotics pretty much teleported him to the AT-ST. He pounded on the side he was on, "Han, you okay?"

"Yeah, it's quite comfortable in here." He yelled back.

Kyle shook his head, "Get back as much as you can."

He was on the underside of the walker. The walker's hatch door, which was on the top of the head, was aimed at the enemy line. The walker's windows were to his left and the back of the head was on his right. Han was lucky the enemy hadn't managed to take to the left flank or he would have been shot a while ago.

Once Han gave the all clear, Kyle dug his blue lightsaber into the base of the walker. Once the blade was through to the other side, he began to carve a large circle into the bottom. He was halfway down when a blue plasma grenade landed on the left side of the walker's head, just above Kyle.

Kyle ducked away from the blast and was happy to see that the walker was unharmed. He started to carve again, "Kyle, not to rush you but we got a fire in here."

Kyle looked up but went back to work. He had to work faster. He could see the fire spreading and Han and Chewy trying to put it out. It was working for now but Kyle knew that it would engulf them soon enough.

The seconds felt like minutes but he finally managed to pull the new hatch off. He sensed something to his left and looked. A Sangheili got bold and took to the left flank, plasma grenade in hand. He launched it and landed inside the AT-ST's window. Kyle pulled Han and Chewy and they ran for cover. They dove down, knowing they wouldn't



clear the blast range.

The AT-ST exploded and Kyle felt the heat of it on his back. To his surprise, he wasn't dead. The smoke cleared and the trio found themselves in a blue energy shield. Kyle looked back to their line and spotted Kaidan with one arm stretch out towards them and another to his temple.

He dropped the shield and Kyle covered Han and Chewy back to the line. They dropped down next to Alenko and Palmer. Kyle patted the tired lieutenant on the shoulder, "Thanks, we owe you one."

"If you got something to eat, we can consider it paid." The biotic smiled.

Chewbacca let out a low growl and reached for one of the pouches on his belt. He pulled out a small energy bar that he must have been saving since they left Coruscant. He tossed it to the soldier and he thanked the Wookie. He piled away the wrappings and took it down in two seconds. He looked up at them and said, "Let's go kick some ass."

**\*\*In the Titan Drop Zone\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC/M-CORE \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Commander Shepherd sat in the cockpit of his Titan, awaiting the go order from Graves. He kept himself busy by talking with his men on the ground. Most of his team was down there. Kaidan went with Alpha with Palmer, Solo, and Katarn. Garrus went with Bravo to provide sniper support from the tree tops. Wrex joined up with Charlie, fighting through the thick of the battle.

Liara and Tali stayed with Halsey. They acted as her personal guard and would join her with fixing the FIB. He wasn't too sure about Halsey but he knew that putting Liara and Tali together was a recipe for results.

"Kaidan, status report."

"Solo and the Wookie took over one of those walker things and gave them hell for a while down here. Commander, no offense, but I think Palmer would kick your ass in a fight." Kaidan responded over the radio.

"Don't get too close, Alenko." Shepherd smiled, "She's deadly. Garrus?"

Garrus shot him a vid from his visor. He was watched the battle from a tree top through his sniper rifle's scope. Every so often, he would fire a shot and took out a target from almost a kilometer away. He pulled back the vid and looked over at the destruction of the geth first line of defense, "I'm just enjoying the view, Commander."

"While you're enjoying your view, Vakarian, I'm doing the hard work."

Wrex bellowed into the comms, "Just like Virmire, I have to do the dirty work."

Shepherd smiled, "Where you at, Wrex?"

"I'm knee deep in geth body parts and I'm loving every minute of it, Shepherd." The krogan answered, "The damn geth put up a shield around the tower. 'Gonna need more than a nuclear bomb to blow that thing up."

"That's what these Titans are for, Wrex. Wait until you see what these things can do." Shepherd told the krogan battlemaster.

"Shepherd," Lieutenant Sarah's voice came through his speaker, "we will commence Titanfall in one minute. Are you ready?"

"All green." He told her.

"Wonderful." She said, "Starting countdown now."

**\*\*Next, three Titanfalls and some Titan vs. Titan action, along with some other things.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading and don't forget to give me feedback. I'm warning you that this is my first time doing a space battle so I apologize if it's a little hard to read.\*\***

### 13. Chapter 13: The Battle for the FIB

**\*\*I put up another poll. I'm debating what to start posting first: The sequel or the enemy POV. I need your help on this one. Just go to profile page and vote. It only takes a second.\*\***

**\*\*Anyway, with no further ado, I give you the second part of the Battle for the FIB.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Thirteen: The Battle for the FIB Part II\*\***

**\*\*In the Titan Drop Zone\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC/M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Chief watched the counter tick down to zero. He had dropped in an ODS pod before and fallen through a planet's atmosphere so this should be nothing. However, he still found himself rechecking everything he could possibly check to make sure he landed without a problem. Everything was green and ready to go so he just waited.

"Five, four," Sarah's voice came over the intercom, "three, two, one, commencing Titanfall!"

Chief felt the metal flooring move under his large Titan and he knew that the Titan was hanging from the metal clamps that were snapped to him.

"Titan One is away!" she signaled. Titan One was Hawke. He was dropping at Bravo-Two. Shepherd was Titan Two and was dropping at Charlie-Two. That made Chief Titan Three at Alpha-Two, "Titan Two is away!"

He was next. He grabbed hold of the safety rails, "This is it."

"We'll be fine." She said. He smirked a little. That was exactly what he said when their escape pod launched from the Pillar of Autumn to her when she was nervous about him standing. He was the only one to survive the crash.

The metal clamps let go and the Titan dropped out of the ship like it was fired from a cannon. He felt gravity fighting back at the Ogre-class Titan as it slammed through layers of atmosphere. Chief didn't bother looking down at all. He knew where he was heading and he knew he needed to stay focused, "Cortana, status report."

"Lasky and the fleet are engaging targets with success; however, a team of CAS-class destroyers just entered the sector. The ground teams are faring well but they will need your support on the push for the FIB. There is also a matter of a shield dome over the tower." She said in his head.

"Perfect." Chief muttered. The Titan slammed against the ground, smashing away a group of trees that had got in the way. He forced the Titan to stand to its full seventeen foot height. The Ogre was smaller in height than the one Hawke used on Chi Ceti but what it lacked in height it made up with size. It was a good bit wider than the Atlas-class Titan and had a lot more shielding. It was pretty much a shorter Atlas on steroids. Perfect for a Spartan.

He grabbed his XO-16 Chaingun off of the Titan's back and readied it for use. In training, he was told that most Ogre Pilots favor the 40mm cannon but he found that the Chaingun was fair more useful.

"Titan Three, this is White Lightning requesting Titan support." He knew that was Sarah Palmer's new callsign. She liked to wear white armor and she was said to be as fast as lightning. The nickname kind of stuck after that.

"Copy that, Lightning. Titan Three is moving to your location." He followed Cortana's navpoint to the remains of one of the Covenant AA guns. Some of the enemy forces were attempting to use the debris as cover. Chief stopped his Titan short and open fired with the Chaingun. The enemy tried to run for cover but Palmer's unit took them out easily.

"Thanks, Titan Three, but I meant with the Titan on our asses." Chief turned to see that they were actually running from an IMC Atlas Titan. Chief moved his Titan so it was in between the Titan and Palmer's unit. The unit ducked down among the rubble as the Atlas fired at Chief.

Prior to their drop, Chief had thought up the idea of placing a hardlight shield on his Titan. While it couldn't deflect shots like Hawke's shield, it was tough enough to block against almost anything. The Atlas's quad rockets bounced off his shield like nothing.

Chief raised his weapon and fired. The Chaingun shot out hundreds of bullets at the Atlas, crippling its shields. Chief sent the Ogre into a dash and grabbed the Atlas with its left hand. He watched the Pilot inside grabbed the ejection lever. He took his hand and placed it over the top of the enemy Titan.

The Pilot ejected himself, right into Chief's Titan's hand. Chief held him there for a minute before tossing him over the Titan's shoulder. That was when he heard the beeping. He looked to see that it was coming from the enemy Titan. He pushed it backwards and attempted to get his Titan clear.

The Atlas exploded, setting fire to some nearby trees. Chief had managed to raise his hardlight shield in time to protect his Ogre from the blast. The only thing that got hit was eight percent of his Titan's shields.

He continued to escort Palmer's unit to the shielded tower.

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Shepherd's Stryder stood up to its eighteen foot height. It was a lot thinner than Hawke's Atlas but Shepherd liked how fast it was. It cut through the forest like a blade as he reached his navpoint. He was to regroup with Wrex's unit and help to find a way to take out the shield around the tower. He found them under fire from a team of Banshees.

He pulled up his quad fire cannon and locked onto the Covenant air support. Once locked, he fired the four shots from the cannon. The missiles slammed into the purple Banshees, turning them into blasts of purple fire.

Four more came zooming out of the darkening clouds. Shepherd turned to meet them and raised his cannon towards them. He locked onto them as the first rain drops fell on the battlefield. They met the same end as the ones before.

"Shepherd, it only took a giant robot to make you awesome." Wrex's voice came through his headset.

Shepherd shook his head and smirked, "Let's get you to that shield, Wrex."

"Right behind you." The krogan grunted as they pushed west towards the tower. The rain was coming down harder now. The rain didn't affect him in the Titan but he knew that Wrex wasn't happy about it. On Noveria, he had complained about the snow. He knew that the krogan didn't care for rain that much either.

For a krogan battlemaster, he sure does complain a lot, Shepherd thought.

"Shepherd, we got company." Wrex yelled.

Shepherd spun around and spotted what the krogan meant. The target was massive. To Shepherd, it looked like a giant spider mixed with a scorpion. The back of the moving station had a large turret while its head moved with a blue light shining, "What the hell is that thing?"

"The humans are calling it a Scarab." Wrex answered, "Let's kill this thing, Shepherd."

The Scarab marched forward and aimed its head towards Shepherd's Titan. Shepherd knew that one shot from that thing would destroy his Stryder. He wasn't going to let that happen.

He dodged the blue energy beam and jetted towards the Scarab. He used the Titan's jet powered boots to hurl itself over the Scarab. He landed behind the moving station and fired a few quad shots into the machine. The shots hit one of the Scarab's legs and it limped to its right side.

"Shepherd, if you knock out its legs, my team and I can storm it." Wrex told him.

Shepherd didn't even bother answering. He dart to the right side of the Scarab and fired some more shots into its legs. The machine crippled to the right, lowering its base layer so it tilted on an angle. Shepherd watched as his krogan squad mate and several UNSC marines stormed the Scarab as it started to regain mobility.

Shepherd opened his comms so he could hear Wrex and his team move through the Scarab.

"Leave none standing!" the krogan yelled, followed by a shot from his Claymore shotgun. Shepherd imagined Wrex unleashing a slug into a Sangheili as they moved through the purple station.

Shepherd jumped in front of the Scarab and slammed his Titan fist in its moving eyepiece. The eye blasted in a blue mist with the might of his Stryder's fist. He jumped back as the turret on top started firing at him. The shields absorbed some of it while he locked on with his wrist rockets. Once locked, the missiles shot out of his Titan's left arm and blasted into the turret.

"Move in, humans." Wrex yelled, "Where's this engine thing you said, Sergeant?"

"Just around the corner." The UNSC sergeant told him.

"That's it?" Wrex laughed, "I was expecting it to be bigger. Shepherd, can you shoot down its leg again. We're going to need an exit."

"No problem, Wrex." Shepherd dashed to the Scarab's left side and fired some shots into the legs. The Scarab dropped down and tilted to its left. Wrex and several marines jumped off as red siren lights shined throughout the Scarab's body, "Wrex, I think you should move."

"Already on it, Shepherd." Shepherd listened to his own advice and got as far as he could before the Scarab exploded. Blue and purple smoke rose from the debris as it crashed to the ground below.

"Wrex, you still there?" Shepherd asked the krogan.

"One of the humans twisted his ankles, weakling, but, other than that, we're good here, Shepherd."

"Copy that, Wrex. Let's push towards the tower." The rain was coming down in full force, now. Lightning lit up the sky and thunder rumbled the ground all over. Over the hilltops, the shield shimmered as the rain hit it. Being in a giant metal Titan, Shepherd began to get nervous about the lightning.

That was when he noticed a bolt of lightning hit the top of the shield. Around the area the bolt hit, the shield dropped for a few seconds before regenerating back to its full strength. He hatched an idea, "Titan Two to Titan Three, Cortana, how much lightning do you think could take down that shield?"

There was silence over the comms for a minute until the AI answered, "Three bolts, or one super charged one, would shut down the shield long enough for a team to move in and disable it permanently."

"This is ODST drop Anvil to Titan Three, the shield would only go down towards the top." It was Gunnery Sergeant Buck, "We are preparing to drop on location Delta but we could reroute to the tower."

"Commander Palmer, what are your orders?" Shepherd asked the Spartan IV.

"Cortana, how positive are you about that shield?" she asked.

"With my timing and the speed of the ODST drop pods, I am ninety-nine percent positive it will work." She answered, "It all depends on how much lightning we could draw. We would need a large metal object. Three of them, to be exact."

He didn't want to suggest it but he had to, "Cortana, we happen to have three large metal Titans."

Cortana was quiet for a minute, "That could work. We set the Titans to auto and move them into position. I'm setting navpoints for us to stand. Judging by the mass of this storm, getting a lightning bolt to snap them shouldn't be a problem. The Titans will overload and create the energy charge we need. Buck, get ready to drop on my order."

"Copy that, ma'am." Buck answered.

Shepherd still didn't like this idea, even though it was his, but they were running out of options. He followed Cortana's marker and found it lead to the base of the shield. He was met by Chief and Hawke's Titans. Chief's Titan stood in the middle with Hawke's on its right and Shepherd on its left. The eject themselves and commanded the Titan's to place their hands on the shielding and raised their other hands up as high as they could.

Lightning shocked from above and slammed into Chief's Ogre's outreached hand. The energy shock went through the Titan and overloaded its systems. The bolt shot to the other two Titans, doing the same.

The shield shimmered, "Sergeant, drop now!"

The shield began to drop from the top.

**\*\*In ODST drop pod\*\***

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Gunnery Sergeant Edward Buck hit the button at the sound of Cortana's voice and the metal coffin shot out of the Birmingham at blinding speed. Buck looked to make sure all nine of the pods dropped with his. He was glad to see that they were all moving at unspeakable speeds towards the tower.

They shot pass the opening in the shield. The last pod barely made it as the shield reclosed itself around them. The pods slammed into the ground around the tower and Buck grabbed his rifle.

He opened the hatch and darted out for cover. He found Dare and Romeo had landed near him but there was no sign off Mickey, "Mickey, you up?"

"We landed on the other side of the tower. How many are with you?" Mickey answered.

Buck took a count as enemy fire flew over their heads. Five of them had landed on the north side of the tower, "Five, Mick."

"I got the other five on the east side."

"Copy that. Locate the shield generator." He ordered. He popped up and took some shots with his submachine gun. The bullets hit an IMC grunt soldier in the head and a stormtrooper in the right breast plate. He spotted a building that hadn't been there when they first arrived at the FIB weeks ago, "There!"

Romeo and Dare followed him while the remaining two ODSTs provided covering fire. Once they reached the building, they shoot back at the enemy forces. Romeo sniped off some of the geths' heads as the other two ODSTs regrouped with them. Romeo switched to a shotgun and took point into the building.

"Dizzy, Ducky," Buck turned towards the two ODSTs, "guard the door."

"Yes, Sarge." Dizzy nodded and took up defensive positions by the door. Buck and his remaining team moved through the building.

"Mickey, status?" he asked through his comms.

"We found a building on the south side of the tower. We're moving in,

now. "

"Copy, we're doing the same." He told his squad mate, "Keep in touch."

The three of them pushed through the hallways, taking out a geth soldier here and a stormtrooper there. They found a small elevator and took it down one level. The doors separated and they found themselves in a large, circular room with a computer terminal at the center, "There! If the shield generator can be found, it will be on there."

The three of them darted for the controls and Dare pounded away at it. Buck radioed to Mickey and found that he had found a similar room. Dare looked back and spoke, "Ed, there are four switches. Two in this building and two in Mickey's. They must be pulled at the same time."

"Romeo, take the left side. I'll take the right. Vee, keep an eye on the door." Buck rallied to Mickey the same information. He dashed for the right hallway and began his trek solo through it. He walked for a few minutes until he reached a small room with a green energy beam incased in glass.

Two stormtroopers tried to stop him. Buck took one of them out with a shot in the head while the other took a few to the chest. The Imperial officer drew a blaster pistol on Buck, "Don't take another step, rebel scum."

"You're in my galaxy. You're the rebel here." Buck fired and two shots zoomed into the officer's chest. The officer did get a shot off but the red laser bounced off Buck's shoulder pad, deflected by his shielding.

With the guards dead, Buck moved to the controls, "Preparing for shield shut down."

When he got three calls back, he counted down from three. On one, he hit the button and the room went silent. Dare's voice came through his helmet's comms, "That worked. The shields are down."

Buck tossed an IED bomb on the controls, "Let's make sure it can't be turned back on."

He ran out, followed by the explosion.

**\*\*In the Transport Hull\*\***

**\*\*Of the Pelican callsign \*\*\_\*\*Bearclaw\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

"You know the plan, mates." Price looked to Soap and Miles, "We bring this bomb into the Covenant ship and make sure it blows. Got it?"

"Yes, sir." They bellowed. Besides Soap and Miles, Price had brought the rest of Task Force 141 with him. Ghost and Roach, two former



ODSTs, sat on the starboard side of the Pelican. On the other side, Yuri and Sam Fisher sat with the rifles in between their legs. Standing behind the bomb that took up the center of the Pelican was Task Force 141's newest member. She was a Spartan III, one of the only living ones, named Sammy-010.

Sammy-010 wore a set of orange armor with large, bubble-like shoulder pads. Her helmet was orange but the front was a crimson red. To Price's surprise, she didn't carry a weapon on her body. Her body was the weapon. Instead of a right hand, the Spartan had a green cannon attached over it.

The team nodded as the Pelican jetted out of the hanger bay. Their mission was to take out the \_CAS\_-class destroyer that was on route to destroy the \_Birmingham\_ with the help of the Reaper Sovereign. Price wanted to use the bomb on the massive squid but he knew that it was a minor enemy compared to the \_CAS\_.

"This is Admiral Lasky to fighter squadrons Athena, Apollo, and Aries. Escort the \_Bearclaw\_ to the advancing \_CAS\_-class destroyer." Lasky's voice radioed through.

"This is Apollo One to Base Leader, we are moving to the \_Bearclaw\_." Luke Skywalker's voice came through.

Price looked out the viewport to see the X-wing fighter. In the hanger bay, he had questioned why it was called an X-wing. In battle, he totally understood it. The wings of the orange starship separated from top to bottom, creating an "X"-like formation from the back. He was surprised to see how fast the fighter went. He knew that the Broadwords were some of the fastest starfighters the UNSC had and the X-wing kept pace with them, "Apollo One to \_Bearclaw\_, we are on your wings."

"Copy that, Apollo One." The Pelican pilot answered, "Cut us a path."

The X-wing and Broadwords zipped by them and engaged the incoming fighters. The enemy forces contained geth starfighters, TIE fighters, Cerberus starships, and IMC Zappers. The Zappers were the size of Pelicans but they dashed in and out of your line of sight faster than bullets. Price didn't like that.

However, they weren't much of a problem for the Broadwords. Two Apollo crafts took four out in the first volley alone. With Aries Squadron covering their right flank, Athena on their left, and Apollo in the front, they were a force to be reckoned with.

They covered the space in between the \_Infinity\_ and the target \_CAS\_ in minutes. Luke's X-wing fired an ion shot at the large hanger bay and the shielding went down. The \_Bearclaw\_ glided inside and lowered its back hatch.

Price and his team jumped off and took out the Sangheili and Unggoy forces in the hanger. With the threat eliminated, Sammy pulled the large, nuclear bomb off the Pelican. It would have taken Price's entire team to move the bomb but, with Sammy, all he needed was her and two of his men to carry it. He preferred that.

"Alright, Yuri, Fisher, you guard the Pelican. Ghost, Roach, help

Sammy with the bomb. Soap, Miles, we'll push on ahead and take out the enemy before they come in with the bomb." He ordered and his men listened.

The trio made their way through the first hallway. Following the basic layout of a \_CAS\_, the main engine rooms should be located towards the back end of the destroyer. To make sure, he had Fisher hack into the ship's database from the hanger. In moments, they had a digital layout of the entire ship.

"I can also track enemy units through the life supports system." Fisher explained, "You have a team of Unggoys in the next room lead by two Sangheilis. The room would be a perfect place to set off the bomb."

"Roger that, Fish." Price pointed to the door, "Stack up."

The three of them stacked up on the door. Miles was on the left with his assault rifle ready. Price took to the right with Soap behind him. Soap held a flashbang in his right hand.

The door opened and the flashbang flew from his palm. It busted in the center of the room, blinding the Covenant forces inside. The three of them moved in. Miles darted at the first Sangheili he could see. He jumped onto the wall with one foot and came down on the Elite. From the bulges of his wrists came half foot long blades. He landed on the Sangheili and drove the hidden blades into his neck. Purple blood covered his arms as he withdrew them.

Price hit the second Elite in the face with some shots from his assault rifle. The Sangheili's shields dropped and Price dove at him, knife in hand. He dug the knife deep into a chink in the blue plated armor.

Soap tossed a grenade at the blinded Grunts that ran around the room. They didn't even see the explosion coming, along with some spare shots from Soap's SMG.

With the room clear, Sammy, Ghost, and Roach came in with the bomb. Under Price's orders, they placed it at the center of them. Judging by the information Fisher got from the ship's computer, it was the perfect spot to activate the nuke.

"Ah, Captain," Fisher came over the radio, "I'm tracking a large enemy formation moving towards your position."

"Which door?" Price asked.

"All of them."

"Bullocks," He whispered under his breath, "I want defensive positions around the bomb. Roach, get that thing ready."

The quiet soldier nodded and ducked down behind the nuke. He began fiddling with the controls as they moved into positions.

"Orders, sir?" Soap asked.

Price pulled out his cigar and placed it between his teeth. He pulled out his Zippo lighter and lit the cigar. He took a deep inhale of

the smoke and let it all out, "Weapons fire, mate. Weapons fire."

**\*\*Don't forget to vote! It will help me out a lot if even just a few of you vote. I really hope you have enjoyed this story so far and I wait to show you what I have in store next.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you all for reading and don't forget to leave me feedback.\*\***

#### 14. Chapter 14: The Battle for the FIB

**\*\*This is the third part of the Battle for the FIB. There will be one last part to finish out the battle. Thank you all for taking the time to read my story and there will be many more to come. This chapter will paint my idea for my next few stories, branching out from this one.\*\***

**\*\*I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoy writing it.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Fourteen: The Battle for the FIB Part III\*\***

**\*\*In the Transport Hull\*\***

**\*\*Of Pelican callsign \*\*\_\*\*Bungie Jump\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Liara sat in the transport section of the Pelican. Across from her, Tali was zipping through her omni-tool. She looked too busy to even notice her. Next to Liara, on her right side, Doctor Halsey sat with her head back. She muttered, "Into the heat of battle we go."

Stationed at the end, nearest the hatch, two UNSC marines sat with Battle Rifles in between their legs. They had offered Liara a UNSC combat suit to wear but she declined. She had something else she wanted to wear instead.

The armor was an Alliance-issued hardsuit. The specs claim that it is red but, to Liara, it looked more like a light pink. She had her helmet in her lap and her Predator pistol snapped to her left hip with the barrel pointed behind her. A few months ago, she would have never thought she would be wearing any sort of armor and carrying any kind of weapon, besides her biotics. It was after seeing her mother die on Noveria when she looked to Ashley Williams for training.

"You don't want to fight, Liara." The human Alliance soldier smirked, "It all ends the same."

"There will be a time where I will need it, Ashley. I need to learn." She pleaded to her.

"Fine, but, if you get hurt, I am not responsible. Got it?"

"Got it." For the next few weeks, Ashley and she spent the late hours in the training area on board the Normandy. Over time, she had become so good at shooting holographic geth soldiers that she held the fourth highest record, under Ashley, Garrus, and Shepherd, in that order. She was proud of herself and was very thankful for her friend's help.

She wore Ashley's armor in her honor.

Before Virmire, Ashley had discarded the pink hardsuit for a blue Onyx-style one. The old hardsuit that they had spent nights joking about was locked away in her locker. When she died on Virmire, Kaidan made it his job to empty it. He found the armor inside. Claiming it wasn't his style, he offered the armor to Liara. The asari scientist accepted it.

"This is Pelican Bungie Jump to White Lightning, please respond." The pilot called through his headset.

"This is White Lightning." Sarah Palmer's voice came over the intercom, "We have the FIB but we got enemy drop ships landing all around us. Take the western passage and we will cover you to the best we can."

"Copy that, White Lightning. ETA five minutes." The pilot answered.

That was when everything went bad.

Liara didn't even have time to react. The missile hit their right wing and the Pelican jolted. The pilot struggled to keep control but lost it to a second missile to the left wing, "This is Bungie Jump. We are hit. I say again, we are hit. We are going down!"

Liara's eye turned white. She reached out her arms and dark matter energy wrapped around her body. The energy engulfed the Pelican, creating a blue shield around it. She knew she couldn't keep the craft in the air but she could stop it from exploding on impact. The Pelican ripped through the tree line until it came to a stop.

Liara let go of her shield and fell to her knees. Tali jumped to her side, "Liara, are you okay?"

"Reminds me of Feros." The asari managed, "I just need a minute."

The quarian opened her omni-tool, "Liara, we don't have a minute. I'm tracking foot mobiles towards our position. They'll be on us in ten."

"And we will be dead in five." Halsey muttered.

The Pelican pilot came to the back, assault rifle in hand. He placed his hand on Halsey's shoulder, "Don't worry, ma'am. We're marines. We'll hold off the forces while you three make a break for the tower. We'll cover you."

"You'll die, Lieutenant." Halsey exclaimed.

The pilot nodded and looked at Liara, "We will die so you make sure you get to that tower and get everyone home."

The hatch of the Pelican lowered and the trio of marines hopped out. The pilot shouted out orders as they charged into the forest. Liara didn't waste any time. She grabbed Tali and Halsey and made a break for the forest, opposite of the marines. Using Tali's omni-tool, they found the best path, avoiding enemy forces.

They moved through the bushes, barely dodging geth patrols and stormtrooper units. Tali stated that they were only two kilometers from the FIB so they picked up the pace. However, that made too much noise.

"Don't move." They turned to see a stormtrooper, blaster in hand. Several more came out of the forest. They were surrounded.

They backed up into each other. The three of them stood back-to-back-to-back with their hands over their heads. Liara, still winded from protecting the Bungie Jump, knew she couldn't take them all out, even with Tali's help. They were caught with no way out.

The lead stormtrooper approached them and reached for Halsey. He never made it.

Two bullets smashed through his helmet, killing him upon impact. The stormtroopers whipped around to find the shooter but that only led to two more deaths. Out of the forest, an orange ray of light came through and the light cut a trooper in half. The light moved to the next one, rain water hissing off it. Liara's mind took a moment to process that the light was actually a lightsaber.

Tali reacted first. She reached for her shotgun and sent a slug into a nearby stormtrooper. Halsey, magnum in hand, took a few potshots at a trooper's torso. In a matter of seconds, the ground was littered with seven dead stormtroopers.

They turned to the stranger with the orange lightsaber. Liara and Tali lowered their weapons but Halsey kept hers up. The Jedi deactivated the blade and held up his hands, "I'm on your side."

"Prove it." The scientist spat.

"Does this?" a voice called from the forest. They turned to see two ODS'Ts walking from the tree line. One of them had an orange breast plate and carried a silenced DMR in his right hand. The other's armor was completely black and he used a silenced submachine gun.

"You're the ODS'T that stayed behind." Tali stated and looked at the Jedi, "You must be Jaden, Kyle's student."

Jaden nodded, "We saw your Pelican go down and followed it to the crash site. We found some geth soldiers there."

"There were three marines that stayed behind." Halsey told him, "Are they?"

"Dead?" Jaden asked, "Yeah, I'm afraid so."

"Let's not let their sacrifice be in vain, then." The scientist claimed, pushing past the Jedi and into the forest. The rest followed suit behind her.

The six of them moved through the forest without the fear of detection. With Tali's omni-tool and Jaden's Jedi abilities, they were partially invisible. There was no worry of a surprise attack or ambush. They reached the hilltops and looked down on the battle below.

The UNSC marines, led by Commander Palmer, protected the western side of the tower. They dug in behind some deployable cover and some of the cargo crates that the enemy left behind. The white armored Spartan called out orders from the frontlines, assault rifle in one hand and shotgun in the other. She looked like a real goddess of war to Liara and she couldn't tell if that was a good thing or a bad.

On the southern side, ODST teams lined up behind their own cover. They used their own drop pods as giant blockades, making it impossible for the enemy to move in their armored units. Liara spotted the ODST gunnery sergeant, Buck, commanding his units and lobbing grenades at Sangheili soldiers and stormtroopers.

On the eastern side of the tower, Liara could sense Shepherd's presences. Since they melded before entering the Mu Relay, Liara could feel when he was close. She knew it was him because it was a feeling of safeness and protection. That was the air that her commander gave off and she enjoyed the feeling.

She knew that the Spartan, Master Chief, was with him. She couldn't sense him but the loud explosion that were coming from that side made her sure of it. That meant that the rest of her team was there, along with the M-COR Pilot, Hawke.

On the northern side, two Phantoms hovered over and dropped teams of Sangheili and Unggoy forces. She saw the black armor of the Arbiter and heard his unmistakable yell. He brandished his energy sword in one hand and shot from his plasma rifle from another.

Jaden looked back, "We'll cover you as you all make a break for the tower."

They nodded and they raced off. Flanked by the Jedi to their left and the ODSTs to their right, they ran down the side of the hilltop until they reached the bottom. Liara threw up biotic shields around them, just in case a stray shot went through. In mere moments, they hurdled over Palmer's cover and ducked down behind it.

The person Liara saw was Kaidan. He dropped down next to her, "Are you both okay?"

"Don't worry about us, Alenko." Tali responded, "We can handle ourselves."

"I wasn't doubting that." The human biotic smiled at them, "Come on, I'll take you to Shepherd."

They followed the lieutenant around the tower to the side Liara knew Shepherd would be on. In his black and red hardsuit, the N7 graduate

was blasting at the enemy line with his assault rifle. They ducked down next to him. Liara touched his shoulder, "What do you need from us?"

"We need to get you down below." Shepherd told her, "The power station should be below the tower. We decided that Hawke, Chief and I will take you down."

"I'm going, too." They looked to see the Jedi Padawan Jaden Korr had stayed with them, "I sense the Dark Side around this place. I want to go and make sure it doesn't consume you."

"Thanks," Shepherd said, halfheartedly, "let's move, then."

Chief and Hawke took point, followed by Liara, Tali, and Halsey. Shepherd and Jaden protected the rear as they entered the Forerunner tower. Liara didn't want to say it out loud but she had a bad feeling about all this.

They stepped into the elevator and Halsey examined the Forerunner symbols that lined it. She nodded and pressed one of them. The elevator shifted for a second before it moved down the shaft.

**\*\*In the Central Chamber\*\***

**\*\*Of an enemy \*\*\_\*\*CAS\*\*\_\*\*-class Destroyer\*\***

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Task Force 141 took positions surrounding the nuke as Roach worked his magic on it. Three Covenant doors opened around the small platform that they stood on. Squads of Loyalist forces flooded into the room.

Captain Price tossed a frag grenade in one of their directions. The explosion took out the Grunts and disabled the Elite's shields. He popped a few shots from his assault rifle into the head of the Sangheili.

Soap used his DMR to sniper off the head of an incoming Sangheili. He took a few shots at the Grunt forces that seemed to make up the bulk of the enemy line.

Miles used his active camouflage to sneak behind a few of the tougher enemies and ran his hidden blades into them. He moved through the crowd of enemies like the wind. He was unseen but they knew he was there.

Ghost laughed after every kill. He counted out loud, "Fifteen, sixteen, seventeenâ€¦"

"Ghost, you don't count Grunts as kills." Soap yelled over to him.

"Three, Fourâ€¦" he switched his count to the Sangheili soldiers that were rushing through the doors.

Sammy stayed silent. She let her actions speak for her. She lunged at

a nearby Elite and blasted a few energy shots into the soldier's head. The Sangheili was down so she rolled to the next. She came up on her right knee and launched a missile at the wall behind two Elites. The wall exploded, hitting some sort of power line, and killed them in a split second.

Price called for a retreat to the nuke and ordered Ghost and Miles to keep up the fire, "We can't hold out here forever. Roach, almost done?"

The soldier lifted his head, "Almost but they will be able to disarm it before we can get off the ship."

"Bollocks," Price whispered, "Soap, you and Sammy get out of here."

"And leave you to die?" the other British soldier barked, "Fat chance, mate. You are far more important than any of us. You get out of here, old man."

"I gave you an order." Price snapped at him.

"And I'm choosing to ignore it. Go, Price. The UNSC has enough dead heroes."

Price looked around. He knew that he had to get Sammy out of there alive. She was the last of the Spartan IIIs. The galaxy needed her and they couldn't afford to let her die here. Soap had a good point. Price was important to the UNSC but so was Soap. So were all of them.

"You're a bastard, mate." Price patted his friend on the shoulder, "When we meet again, I owe you a drink."

"You'll owe me twenty. Now, go!" Soap watched as the Spartan and the captain raced out of the room.

"Where's the captain going, Soap?" asked Ghost.

"I ordered him to get off the ship. We're taking this one." Soap said to them and they nodded in agreement, "Roach, the moment the \_Bearclaw\_ is away, blow it. The rest of you, give them hell."

And hell they gave them. Miles recloaked himself and darted back into the action. He dived onto Elites with his hidden blades and popped shots in Jackals. Ghost opened fired on the enemy line, keeping track of the enemies that he killed. Soap lobbed grenades at the enemy until he ran out.

Roach worked on the nuke. Once it was ready, he grabbed his rifle and joined the action. It didn't last long. A needler shot pierced his neck. He fell to the ground next to Soap. Soap knelt down to try and help him but he was lost. Soap looked and spotted the nuke's detonator in his hand. He grabbed it.

Mile's was the next to go. He was dashing between enemies when a plasma grenade stuck to his arm. Without showing emotion, the assassin jumped into a group of Sangheili Elites and exploded, taking them with him.



Ghost fired from his rifle, "Twenty-two, twenty-threeâ€|"

He never made it to twenty-four. A plasma shot hit him in the arm, causing him to drop his weapon. An Elite broke cover and ran his energy sword in the chest of the UNSC soldier. His body went limp and the Sangheili dropped it to the ground.

Soap backed up until his leg hit the nuke. He was surrounded and he was out of ammo. The Covenant Loyalist aimed their weapons at his head and the Elite that killed Ghost stopped in front him, "Demon, you have failed. You will die for your sins."

"Yeah, but so will you." Soap grabbed the detonator and pressed the red button. He smiled as he saw the Elite's face as he let go of it.

**\*\*In the Transport Hull\*\***

**\*\*Of the Pelican callsign \*\*\_\*\*Bearclaw\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Captain Price looked out the window of the Pelican and watched as the Covenant ship exploded. The blast came from the center of the ship, splitting it into two halves. Price knew that its systems were down and anyone left living on board was casted into the void of space. They were dead in seconds.

He tried to fight back the pain of losing most of his squad. He had served with Soap for almost ten years and looked at him as the perfect soldier. Soap had declined an offer to join the Spartan IV project just because he enjoyed working with Price and the rest of Task Force 141.

Desmond Miles may have been young and stupid but he was a damn good soldier. He knew how to get stuff down and that's what Price liked most about the young assassin. Had his cards been dealt better, Miles would have been a high ranking officer. Instead, he died on that ship.

Ghost and Roach had the best ODS drop record Price knew off. The dropped in almost two hundred missions during the Human-Covenant War. They were held captive for two of them and Roach had even been set on fire one time. They were heroes and they were gone.

All that was left of TF 141 sat in the Pelican. Yuri and Fisher kept quiet in the dark corner of the ship while Sammy remained emotionless behind her helmet. Price knew she was too important to stay behind and die but was he? Soap was six times the man that Price was but he thought otherwise. Price pulled out his last cigar and lit it. He smiled for a moment as the smoke puffed from his lips, "This one's for you, Soap. Damn good job, mate."

**\*\*In the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Master Chief was the first one off the elevator. The seven of them stepped out into a grand chamber with a ceiling that went on forever. Chief attempted to find the top of it but he failed. A long metal pathway ran from the elevator to a center platform. Branching out of the platform was four other pathways, leading deeper into the room.

They stopped at the platform. A large computer terminal, similar to the one he saw on the first Halo ring, sat before them. Halsey didn't say a word while she pounded away at it. Liara and Tali did the same to the smaller terminals nearby.

Minutes felt like hours why the scientists and technician worked. After a long pause, Halsey stepped away, "Chief, can you plug Cortana into the system?"

"It's okay, Chief." She said in his head. He unplugged her from his system and handed her to Halsey. Halsey went back to the terminal, now with Cortana in it, and began working again.

"I almost have it." She said, finally, "There are four power outlets that need to be pressed at the same time in the four corners of the room. Can you four do that?"

They nodded and got to work. Chief took the northwestern path while Shepherd went northeast, Hawke went southeast, and Jaden went southwest. The path was a long one and the sides dropped down to the void below. Chief had been to hundreds of Forerunner structures but he never felt as nervous as he did about this one. Something was off about it but he just couldn't figure it out.

At the end of the pathway, a large computer terminal sat. A green button sat at the center of it. Chief wasn't sure but he guessed that that was button that he needed to press, "I'm at the power outlet."

"So am I." Shepherd sounded, followed by Hawke and Jaden.

"On my count." Halsey radioed, "Three, two, one—"

Chief pressed the button and blinding light shined through his visor. The light caused his vision to turn white, blinding him from the world around him. After a complete minute of this, the light began to dim but he wasn't in the Forerunner tower anymore.

He stood on a metal platform surrounded by pink and purple clouds. He wasn't alarmed because he had seen this place before. He had seen a vision like this on Requiem when he spoke with the AI Librarian, the wife of the Didact that he had to kill. The question all this raised was: Why again?

"Where the hell are we?" Chief turned at the sound of Shepherd's voice. Standing to his left, the Alliance commander stood with confusion pasted on his eyes. Chief looked around and noticed that Hawke and Jaden had joined him as well.

"Allow me to answer that." A voice echoed through the scene and the center of the platform began to shine. Standing before them, a nine and a half foot tall woman hovered in front of them. The woman wore a

long, white gown, draping over her hidden body. She wore a metal headdress around her nose-less face. Chief knew who she was. She had haunted his every dream for almost two years.

"Are you really the Librarian or just another imprint?" Chief asked her.

She smiled, refusing to answer the question, "I am First-Light-Weaves-Living-Song but you can call me the Librarian. I am the Lifeshaper for the Forerunners while the job of advancing the human race."

"Am I the only one seeing that?" Hawke asked them.

"No, young Pilot, I am really here." The Librarian stated to him, "You are all here for a higher purpose. I am the one who brought you together."

"You pulled us from slipspace." Chief acknowledged and the Librarian nodded.

"I also created the wormhall in Universe 03 that brought the Birmingham to Universe 01." She explained, "Which allowed Ian to activate the Bridge, bringing the Normandy from Universe 02 to Universe 01."

"You were the disturbance in the Force that Luke felt. You guided him to the Bridge." Jaden stated.

"Yes, I used the power that you call the Force to guide the young Skywalker to Galaxy 452's end of the Bridge." She told the Jedi, "However, I did not count on your enemies to follow you through but it had its advantage. Lady Ion only made your jobs a little easier."

"Our jobs?" Chief questioned.

"You are the Reclaimer, the work of a thousand lifetimes." She looked at Chief, "But you can't do it alone. You, four, are the Guardians. You must succeed."

"What is it we are supposed to succeed at?" asked Shepherd.

"There are four Focus Icons." A small symbol appeared in front of her. The symbol was of a long T-shaped item, "The Icons control their respected Bridges. Universe 01 Galaxy 343's Icon is currently in use at the top of the tower. Three more are out there and must be found."

"Where are these Icons?" asked Hawke.

"In Universe 01 Galaxy 452, Jaden's galaxy. In Universe 02 Galaxy 343, Shepherd's galaxy and in Universe 03 Galaxy 343, your galaxy." She answered him, "You must find the Icons and return them to their proper places."

Her body shimmered for a second like static, "I am running out of time. You must go. Reclaimer, you must go with the Commander. Jedi, you must go with the Pilot. Find the Icons. Close the Bridges."

She lit up again into a blinding light, causing Chie to bring his left arm up to shield himself. When he lowered his hand again, he was back in the tower, in front of the power outlet, "Chief, Chief, are you there?"

It was Cortana, "I'm fine."

"What happened?"

"I'll explain later. Is the power back on?" he asked.

"Yes, meet us back at the center. Are you sure you're okay?"

"Positive." He turned and ran back to the center of the tower. He arrived at the same time as the others.

Halsey turned away from the terminal with Cortana in hand, "I was one final adjustment I have to make at the top of the tower and we are online."

Chief grabbed Cortana from her and plugged her back in, "Let's go, then."

They raced to the elevator and hit the correct button. Static came over Chief's comms, "This-White-ning, I-pinned down-enemy-I need backup!"

A large explosion came over the speaker and the transmission was gone. Chief looked around, "Shepherd, Jaden, get Halsey to the top. Hawke, help me get Liara and Tali back down the tower and help Palmer."

The elevator stopped and the door opened up to the staircase. Promethean Knights appeared on the pillars and they stepped out. Chief pulled his Battle Rifle off his back and slammed a new magazine in it.

**\*\*Top of the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Shepherd, Halsey, and Jaden rode the elevator to the top. The closer they got, the more Shepherd got to think about what had just happened to him. Did he have a religious moment?

He shook the thought away and remembered that the Librarian had called herself a Forerunner. There was that word again. The Forerunners were like his Protheans, only millions of lightyears ahead of them. They made the Protheans look like cavemen. Now, he had to find some kind of Icon while stopping the Reapers. Shepherd really had his work cut out for him.

The elevator stopped at the top and the doors opened, revealing the large central control station of the Bridge. Standing at the controls, a hooded woman turned around. She lowered her hood. She was completely bald and had bright purple eyes. She had a burn mark that deformed her right cheek, "I am Lady Ion and I have been waiting for

you, Jaden."

She thumbed her red lightsaber to life and the blade grew to its full length. Jaden stepped between them and activated his orange blade, "You killed Rosh."

"Maybe I did but that doesn't matter, does it? What matters is that you will meet the same fate." She lunged at him and Jaden blocked the attack. He pushed her away and hit her back from the controls. They disappeared behind the central pillar but they heard their sabers clashing.

Halsey darted for the controls and got to work. Shepherd stood behind her with his pistol in hand. As she finished, Shepherd heard the sound of the elevator doors opening. He turned to see Sarah Palmer flanked by two geth soldiers. She was knocked out and her mouth was gagged. Shepherd aimed his pistol at the geth but he realized the fourth person. The four people moved out of the elevator, allowing the doors to close shut behind them.

"Commander Shepherd, I am glad to see you made it this far," The rouge Spectre, Saren, stood behind Palmer with his own pistol to the Spartan's head, "but I'm afraid it is all over now."

"Give it up, Saren. Sovereign is using you. You're indoctrinated!" Shepherd called out.

The turian laughed, "You said the same of Virmire but I know the truth. Sovereign is only making me stronger and the might of the Reapers will be mine."

"Not if I kill you first." Shepherd stated.

"Then, I'll kill her. Is her life worth it, Shepherd? Could you bare the pain of losing her to stop me?"

"What do you want, Saren?"

"I want you to open a path home." He looked at Halsey, "Now."

"Shepherd," Halsey started but he waved her off.

"Do it."

"What?"

"He's here. I can stop one of them and can catch up to Sovereign later." He told her, lowering his pistol, "Do it."

She turned and pounded few commands into the controls. She stepped away as a large energy beam shot up from the base of the tower.

They looked through the viewport and watched as the Reaper entered the wormhole. The hole closed shut behind it. Shepherd turned his attention back to Saren, "Looks like Sovereign realized it didn't need you anymore."

"It would appear so." Saren said. He stepped forward. His body passed through Palmer's like he was a ghost, "Or not."

Shepherd wanted to shoot him. Halsey did that for him. Shooting through the hologram of Saren, her bullets hit the geth soldiers flanking Palmer. The Spartan IV dropped to her knees and Shepherd ran to her side, "Are you okay?"

He lowered her gag, "Yeah, fine. Took you long enough."

That was when they heard the breaking of glass. They turned the corner to see that Lady Ion had pushed Jaden out of the viewport and onto the outside of the tower. Jaden laid on his back on one of the tower's outstretched arms. His lightsaber was out of reach.

Shepherd fired two shots from his gun but they were absorbed by the Dark Jedi's lightsaber. She pushed him back against the wall and stepped out onto the walkway. Rain water hissed off her red lightsaber like a snake.

Shepherd got to his feet and attempted to follow them. He was stopped by a large, black hand. He turned to see he was face-to-face with Thel 'Vadam. He nodded at Shepherd and pointed to Palmer, "She needs medical attention. I'll finish up here."

He squeezed his energy sword to life and jumped out the broken viewport.

**\*\*Don't forget to vote on my profile for what story you want to read next. I'm really excited to start writing the sequel but I know there are a lot of questions regarding the bad guys in this story so I will let the readers choose.\*\***

**\*\*Thank you for reading and don't forget to give me any feedback.\*\***

## 15. Chapter 15: The Battle for the FIB

**\*\*Here's the last part of the Battle for the FIB. I hope you like it.\*\***

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Fifteen: The Battle for the FIB Part IV\*\***

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

The \_Infinity\_ jointed as the MAC blast shot from its cannon. The blue projectile slammed into the lead \_CAS\_, destroying its shields. Dropping out of slipspace behind the enemy, the \_Shadow of Intent\_ aimed an energy shot at the rear ship. The three \_CAS\_-class destroyers returned fire but they were stuck in the ambush.

"I want Archer missiles on them. Fire when ready!" Lasky yelled to

his crew.

"Archer missiles away." The weapons officer yelled back.

Lasky watched the missiles hit the lead ship, causing havoc across its hull. He had just received the status report from Task Force 141. He lost the unit but they got the job done. For now, that's all he could hope for.

"MAC blast on \_CAS\_ II." He ordered.

The MAC fired at one of the ship's, creating a hole in the center of it.

"Sir, the ship is overloading." Roland explained.

"Get us clear of the blast range."

The Covenant destroyer exploded in a matter of seconds. The supernova-like blast lit up the space around it before dimming out, leaving nothing standing.

"One down, two to go." He said out loud.

'Vadum's voice came through the speakers, "Admiral, make that one left."

Lasky watched as the two Separatist corvettes opened fired on the rear \_CAS\_. Purple and blue energy lasers smashed through the destroyer's shields until they were gone. One blast from the \_Shadow of Intent\_ and the \_CAS\_ met the same end as the other.

The \_Infinity\_'s crew yelled in excitement. Lasky had to use the intercom system to get their attention back, "We're not out of the woods, yet. We got one last ship to deal with."

The bridge returned to the battle as the \_Infinity\_ and the \_Shadow of Intent\_ moved in on the \_CAS\_-class ship. Lasky was about to give the order when Roland interrupted, "Admiral, the ship is trying to get us on comms. They may want to surrender."

Lasky thought for a moment before answering, "Patch them through."

Roland nodded and a red plated Sangheili appeared on screen, "I am Shipmaster 'Oninamee of the \_Confession\_ and I will like to surrender to you."

"Surrender? A Covenant Shipmaster never surrenders." 'Vadum's voice came through.

"This one does." 'Oninamee responded, "The alien told us that he was a Forerunner. We believed him. Since his ship left us here to die, we realized that he was no Forerunner. We were used and lied to. We wish to retreat from this conflict."

"That is no excuse for your actions, 'Oninamee," 'Vadum stated, "Your actions are of your own."

"And I paid for them with the loss of my brothers." The Loyalist

Shipmaster yelled.

"Stop, both of you." Lasky ordered, "'Oninamee, the UNSC \_Infinity\_ allows for your retreat but you must leave your ship. You may use any life pods or transports but the \_Confession\_ is ours. You either agree to my decision or Shipmaster 'Vadum will fire upon you. It is your choice."

"Admiral Lasky, you can't make a decision like that." 'Vadum yelled through.

"Actually, I can, 'Vadum. 'Oninamee is surrendering to me. According to your Sangheili laws of naval warfare, I have all rights to the ship and its crew." Lasky said, "However, my crew does not know how to properly use a Covenant \_CAS\_-class destroyer so I will give the \_Confession\_ to the Separatist fleet. Does that satisfy you, Shipmaster."

The Sangheili Shipmaster grunted in response.

"Do you agree to these terms, Shipmaster 'Oninamee?" Lasky asked the Loyalist.

"I am already ordering the evacuation. Thank you, Admiral Lasky. My crew and I owe you our lives. We will not forget this." The Sangheili Loyalist sounded, cutting the transmission.

Lasky smiled at the victory. Roland appeared next to him, "Sir, 'Oninamee is correct. Sovereign retreated into a wormhole created by the FIB. Halsey must have got it back online and the enemy used it to send the Reaper through."

"We'll worry about that later, Roland. Let's clean up the rest of this mess." He ordered.

"Aye, sir." Roland stated, "Setting attack course on the remaining \_Fury\_-class ship and geth capital ships."

**\*\*Outside the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Lady Ion stood four meters away from Jaden as he attempted to reach for his lightsaber. The silver handle had fallen onto the ledge below, just out of reach. He knew he could use the Force to call upon it but Ion was stopping him.

He needed her to lose her focus on him.

That was when he noticed the armored Sangheili stepping out of the broken viewport. The seven foot tall alien wore his black armor with a plasma rifle attached to his right hip. On his back, he wore a large blue pack with two slots at the bottom. He wasn't sure what the pack would do but he hoped it would be usefull.

The Arbiter stepped towards them, energy sword in hand. Lady Ion sensed the alien's presence and turned, "Ah, you must be the Arbiter. The Covenant speaks of you often."



"I'm sure all good things." The Arbiter grunted. He stepped closer and Ion changed to a defensive pose.

"I have dueled a few of you Sangheilis. You are unbalanced and your blades are weak." She taunted.

"Then, we will see who is weaker." The Arbiter charged. He swung his blade at Ion's head. She brought up her crimson blade in response. The two weapons smashed into each, sending sparks flying over the edge. The rain water hissed off the two as the Arbiter pushed her backwards.

Jaden took his chance and drew upon the Force. In seconds, the lightsaber flew to his hand and he keyed it to life. The orange colored blade grew from the handle, creating waves of steam from the rainwater, and he was back in the action.

He darted towards the duelists but Ion sensed him in time. From the back end of her handle, another red beam of light shot out. She held the handle like a staff and swung at Jaden's head. Jaden blocked the attack.

Thel 'Vadam made another go at her but she blocked with the other end of the staff. She pushed him back and focused on Jaden. She moved her blades at him, causing Jaden to move backwards along the metal walkway. With no guard rails, one wrong step and Jaden would fall to his death.

Ion closed in for the kill but 'Vadam was on her before she could do so. She spun to block his attack. He switched to the defensive, allowing Jaden a chance to regain his stance. Together, they attack Ion from both fronts and Jaden could sense she was tiring.

They had her on the ropes, until he showed up.

Jaden sensed that something was approaching. He looked to his left and spotted the missile coming for them. Jaden pushed the Arbiter back with the Force and shot himself out of the way. The missile crashed into the side of the tower, leaving a black imprint in its place.

The man who fired the missile hovered in the distance. His armor was green, black, and brown all over and he wore a helmet to hide his face. He carried a blaster rifle in his hands and used a jet pack. Jaden knew the man well. It was Boba Fett, the man that killed his father.

Jaden wanted to jump at him but he knew that he was too far. Besides, the Jedi bounty hunter would have a beat on him before he reached him. He caught Thel's eye and nodded at the Sangheili.

The Arbiter jumped at Fett, using his own jump pack to tackle the hunter out of the air. They landed on another walkway with 'Vadam on top. The Elite attempted to stab his sword into Boba Fett but the bounty hunter used his jet pack to shoot out from under him.

Thel jumped to his feet and swung his blade at the man. Fett dodged it by going backwards and firing a few shots into the Arbiter's shields. 'Vadam shook it off and reached for his rifle with his free

hand. He fired a few quick shots at him.

Meanwhile, Ion split her staff into two separate lightsabers. She was coming down on Jaden harder than anyone has ever done so before. Jaden remembered when Rosh set a training droid on him in practice, forgetting to take it off Luke's training level. The droid would have killed Jaden if he wasn't lucky.

\_Luck has nothing to do with it, Jaden\_, Kyle had said. \_There is only skill and the Force.\_

He blocked another attack from her right blade and dodged the left blade. He was running out of room on the walkway and he was outnumbered. Ion had two lightsabers and years of experience. He had one and a few months of training

He needed another weapon.

He looked and spotted Thel fighting off the bounty hunter. Boba Fett had grabbed one of the prized lightsabers off his belt and was using the purple blade to attack the Arbiter. He spotted something on the Sangheili's back. It was a second energy sword.

With the speed of a Jedi, Jaden bolted for the edge of the walkway. He jumped with all his might to the next one. He reached out with the Force and pulled the energy sword off 'Vadam's back. The Arbiter looked at him and nodded for he knew that he needed it more.

He squeezed the blade to life and moved it to his left hand. With his lightsaber in his right, he used the energy sword more like a shield. Ion jumped to his walkway and swung at him. He blocked the overhead swing with the energy sword.

She countered with another attack from the second lightsaber but the red blade collided with his orange blade. He pushed her backwards. He was now on the offensive.

On his left, the Arbiter was nowhere to be found. He wanted to find him with the Force but his attention was needed elsewhere. He swung his saber at Ion and followed up with the energy sword. She parried the attack and pushed him backwards.

Jaden, off balanced, fell onto his back. He felt his saber fall from his hand and turned his head to watch it fall off the ledge. The energy sword remained in his left hand.

Ion stood over him and smiled, "You know, you look a lot like Rosh before I killed him."

"Rosh isâ€|"

"â€|dead, yes, it would appear so." She smirked again, "He begged for me to let him join me and the offer was tempting. However, he was weak. The Dark Side does not accept the weak."

"You're lying. Rosh isn't dead."

"I guess you'll never know, will you, Jaden Korr? My master will be very much pleased at your death." She spun her right lightsaber around so the blade pointed behind her. She raised it up over her

head and was to bring it down on him but she stopped.

She couldn't bring her blade down because she had one in her chest. Jaden could make out the white tip of an energy sword retreated back into her body. Lady Ion fell to her knees, dropping her sabers, and fell off the ledge.

Standing in her place, Thel 'Vadam looked down at him, "Are you okay?"

Jaden nodded. He took the alien's hand and was pulled up to his feet. He squeezed the energy sword and it deactivated. He handed it back to the Arbiter, "I believe this is yours? Did you kill him?"

The Arbiter took the blade but shook his head, "I had him until he jetted away. He disappeared into the forest. I will hunt for him soon."

"For now, let's just get off this tower." Jaden said, pulling his soaked blonde hair out of his eyes.

**\*\*Outside the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky stood in between Commander Palmer and Captain Dare. Behind them, the FIB's southern entrance made up the backdrop. In front of them were the heroes of the battle. From his left to right, the crew of the Normandy ending with Commander Shepherd stood proudly next to Pilot Hawke, Captain Graves, and Lieutenant Sarah. Next to them, Chewbacca, Leia, Han, Luke, Kyle, and Jaden stood smiling. Bringing up the rear was the two droids, Artoo and Threepio.

"According to Doctor Halsey, the FIB is up and running. You can return home." Lasky told them, "However, Graves, the Birmingham must be defitted before your leave. We will supply you with a full tank of fuel and two reserve tanks. That should be enough to get you home."

"Thank you, Admiral." Graves saluted. He was now back to his original title of Vice Admiral since his tour with the UNSC was now complete.

"Commander Shepherd," Lasky said, looking at the N7 soldier, "I believe have a flight to catch."

"So do I, sir." Lasky turned to see the Master Chief standing behind him. In his hand, he carried a cargo crate and a duffle bag was slung over his armored shoulders.

"Master Chief, where are you going?" asked Palmer.

"With Shepherd." He grunted.

Lasky frowned, "Chief, you're needed here."

"Not as much as I am needed there." He responded.

"Hood is going to have a field day with this." muttered Dare.

"Let him." Chief stated, "This is more important."

Lasky nodded, "I trust your instincts, Chief, but how are you going to maintain Cortana and your armor?"

"That would be through me." He looked to see that Halsey stepped out behind her Spartan.

"Doctor Halsey? You're going, too?" Liara spoke up.

"It took some convincing but Chief made it simple. I am useless here. I need to be out in the field, looking."

"Looking? For what?" Palmer asked.

"Nothing yet but we'll find something." She smiled.

"I don't like it but what can I say? If I tell you 'no', you'll go anyway. I might as well avoid the paperwork." Lasky shook his head, "You take care of yourself, Chief."

"Don't worry, Admiral." Cortana's voice rang from Chief's helmet's speakers, "I'll take care of him."

"Then, it's settled." Shepherd spoke up, "Let's go stop Saren from getting to Ilos."

Chief nodded and followed the commander to the Normandy. The small ship had been hovering nearby until Shepherd called for her. The blue ship touched down so they could board it.

"Wait!" Chief turned to see Pilot Hawke running towards him, "Don't leave yet."

"We have our jobs to do, Hawke." Chief stated.

"I know, but you can't do it alone." He reached for his side arm's holster and unclipped it from his Pilot's armor. He spun the holster around so the handle was pointed towards Chief, "Take this."

"Your Smart Pistol?"

"You did so well with it before. I have dozens on the Birmingham." He told him, "You take it."

Chief grabbed the pistol and nodded, "Thanks, I'll bring it back in one piece."

"Yeah, I doubt it." Hawke smirked. He straightened his back and gave Chief a salute. The Master Chief returned it and stepped onto the ramp.

They took one last look back before the ramp closed behind them. Lasky looked at Palmer, "Halsey showed you how to work the FIB?"

"Yes, sir." She stated.

"Go," He pointed up to the tower and the Spartan IV ran off to follow the order. He turned back to the remaining people, "anything else?'

"Yeah," Jaden spoke up. Lasky hadn't ever met the young Jedi but he knew that he was the one that was feeding them information on the FIB. Without him, Lasky wondered if the ground assault would have been possible, "the \_Raven's Claw\_ is going with the \_Birmingham\_."

Lasky raised an eyebrow, "Why?"

"We want to do some sightseeing." Kyle smiled at the admiral, "According to Jaden, the \_Birmingham\_ is looking for something and they will need our help with it."

"I guess that's why only the \_Falcon\_ and Luke's X-wing is docked down here." Lasky realized. He shrugged his shoulders, "Who am I to deny it? We'll open the hole but it's up to you to enter it."

They said their final farewells and retreated to their ships. Lasky and Dare rode a Pelican back to the \_Infinity\_. He wanted to watch from the bridge as their friends and allies disappeared.

**\*\*At the top of the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge\*\***

**\*\*On an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Commander Palmer arrived at the top of the tower. She leaned over the controls, staring at the numbers before her. Two hours ago, Halsey had given her a run down on how the tower worked. She needed to plug in the universal ID number into the terminal followed by the galactic ID number. Then, with the press of a green button, the tower would do the rest.

She was confused on how Halsey knew the correct numbers. She had written them on a datapad for her to reference. She decided not ask too many questions. She typed in UNI-02 into the first section followed by GAL-343 in the next. She reached for the final button and stopped.

She couldn't do it. Not without saying goodbye. She didn't know why but she couldn't shake Shepherd out of her head. All they did was share a drink in the lounge but he had been so nice and charming that she would have accepted his invitation hadn't she been called to a not-so-important meeting. She cursed herself for not skipping it.

Now, at a press of a button, he would be gone. She may never see the Alliance soldier ever again. She may never see the Master Chief ever again, either. Over the past year, the Master Chief had been her mentor. Without his guidance, she was sure she would fail.

Now, she was sending him away, too.

She keyed her comms, "White Lightning to \_Normandy\_, are you ready for launch?"

"This is the \_Normandy\_," Joker's voice came through, "we are ready for launch on your go."

She wanted curse. Why hadn't Shepherd answered the comm? Did he have more important stuff to do, first? She shook her head and reached for the button, "Preparing for launch."

She waited a few seconds, hoping to hear Shepherd's voice one last time. She counted to ten in her head. By the time she reached six, she was worried he wouldn't answer. At eight, she began to panic. At nine, she knew he wasn't going to answer. At ten, she rested her hand on the green button.

"This is Commander Shepherd to White Lightning." She jumped at the sound of his voice, "When we get back, we'll have another drink together, Commander."

She smiled, satisfied in his response. She pressed the button, "We'll see, Commander."

She watched through the viewport as the \_Normandy\_ disappeared into the wormhole. It would be a few hours before the \_Birmingham\_ would go through and the \_Falcon\_'s crew wasn't ready to leave yet. She decided that she needed to take a nap. She hadn't slept since Saren's geth forced her into a mid-battle snooze

She took a Pelican up to the \_Infinity\_. She headed for private quarters on the sixteenth deck. She opened the sliding door and closed it behind her. She pulled the hair tie out of her bun and let her brown hair fall to her shoulders. It was longer than most Spartan's hair but she didn't care. She enjoyed the length.

She began to strip off her uniform, throwing it onto the chair by her desk. She stood at the center of the room, wearing only a white tank top and a pair of shorts. Something caught her eye by her bed. She wasn't one to leave things lying around so the sight of the brown bottle confused her. She knew she hadn't put it there. Her booze was hidden under her desk. Besides, it was a bottle she hadn't seen in years.

The bottle was wide at the bottom with a thick neck. A black label wrapped around the top. The amber colored liquid floated around as the \_Infinity\_ drifted. She stepped forward and grabbed the bottle. She turned it around and smiled at the name. Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey.

"You came through after all, Shepherd." She whispered. She broke the seal and twisted the cap off it. She grabbed a glass from under her desk and poured the drink into it. She sat on the edge of her bed, glass in hand, and sipped it. She let out a low sigh, "You did good, Shepherd. You did good."

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over Illos\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

"We made it." Shepherd said, breaking the silence. They had just fallen out of the wormhole and it had brought them to Ilos, their original destination. A geth dreadnought sat between them and the Prothean planet.

"Ah, Shepherd, any ideas?" Joker asked.

"Bring us in using the stealth drives. The geth shouldn't be able to see us." He stated and Joker struggled.

He inched the \_Normandy\_ closer and the ships didn't attack. Even after they crossed into their firing range, they didn't even fire a warning shot. Shepherd rubbed his chin, "Tali, can you scan the ship for me?"

Over the intercom, the quarian answered, "Already did, Shepherd. I got no geth on board. The ship's empty."

"That means the conduit is here. Saren found it. We're running out of time." He said, "Joker, find us a landing zone. We'll go down in the Mako."

"Negative, sir. There are no drop zones close enough." Navigator Pressly stated.

"Well, there is one." Joker pointed out.

"Too close, Joker. Not even you could do that." Pressly stated.

"Is it possible, Press?" Shepherd asked.

"Possible, yes. Likely, no."

"Anyone else have any ideas?" Shepherd asked around.

Before anyone could answer, Joker spoke up, "I can do it."

Shepherd shot him a look, "Are you sure?"

"Positive, sir."

Shepherd nodded, "Good, Alenko, Tali, remain on the \_Normandy\_. We may need you on the Citadel. Pressly, get the Fifth Fleet and do whatever you can to get Hackett to move it to the Citadel. Liara, Garrus, Wrex, and Chief, meet me in the Mako."

His voice echoed over the intercom as Joker prepared himself for the greatest feat he would ever have to pull off. It would be something nice to add to his resume.

\*\*I am going to continue the story until the end of the first Mass Effect. The sequel will start afterwards, at the beginning of Mass Effect 2. I hope you enjoyed the last part of the Battle for the FIB. Next, Shepherd and Chief will have to stop Saren from bringing in the Reapers. Can they make it in time?\*\*

\*\*Thank you for reading and don't forget to leave me feedback.  
\*\*

## 16. Chapter 16: The Citadel

**\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\***

**\*\*Chapter Sixteen: The Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Mako\*\***

**\*\*In the Hanger Bay\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over Ilos\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Chief followed Garrus out of the elevator and to the Mako. The tank was a six-wheeled vehicle with a pointed front and mounted cannon on the top. The back of the tank had a lowered hatch for them to enter from. Already on board, Shepherd and Liara were running checks on the Mako's system. Outside the Mako, Wrex made himself look business by checking his shotgun.

"Wrex doesn't like Shepherd's driving." Garrus told him as they approached, "I don't blame him."

Shepherd popped his head out of the hatch, "Garrus, Chief, come on. Let's go."

"He's excited." Chief grunted.

"We've been looking for Ilos for a long time. Months ago, we set out on this journey so to actually be here it's breathtaking. Ashley would have loved it."

"I've heard your team mates mention her. Is she a fallen comrade?" Chief asked.

The turian nodded, "We lost Williams on Virmire. We found a krogan cloning facility that was ran by Saren. We planned to use a nuclear bomb to blow it up with the salarians' help. They wanted one of our men to go with them. Shepherd chose Ashley."

"And she died in battle." Chief guessed.

"No, she made it to the turrets she needed to destroy and did a damn good job with what she got. It was when the \_Normandy\_ unloaded the nuke when things got hairy. Saren and more geth showed up and Shepherd only had time to save one crew member. Kaidan or Ashley."

"And he chose Kaiden." Chief stated the obvious.

"She died on Virmire so we could have this moment." Garrus stated as they reached the Mako, "Let's not let her down."

Chief nodded and followed the turian sniper into the Mako. The tank was rather roomy, even with the krogan sitting next to him. Ever



since their little fight in the training ring, the battlemaster looked at Chief with pride and honor. Usually when you punch someone in the lower jaw, they want your blood. He was starting to like the krogan for that.

The hatch sealed behind them and Shepherd took controls of the Mako. Garrus took his place at the cannon while Liara, Wrex, and Chief sat in the padded chairs. Shepherd looked back, "You might want to strap in."

Without question, Wrex grabbed the safety harness and tightened it around his body. Liara did the same but without the quickness. Chief advised Cortana if he should even bother and she insisted that it would be smarter if he did. Shrugging her off, he decided to do it anyway.

"Alright, Joker, do it." Shepherd said into his helmet's comms.

"Alright, here goes everything." Joker's voice called through and the lower hatch of the \_Normandy\_ dropped, revealing the rugged landscape before them.

Shepherd hit a few buttons, detaching the Mako from the hanger bay. The tank moved towards the end of the ramp. Shepherd kept his foot on the pedal, waiting for Joker's go.

"Now!"

The Mako shot out of the hanger like a Titan, breaking through the cloud line. Liara brought up her biotic shield as the tank's six wheels slammed against the ground. The tank skidded to a stop, centimeters from the large metal door.

They waited a second. Half of them expected the tank to explode while the other half expected a large amount of enemy fire. Neither happened. Shepherd jumped off the controls and moved for the hatch. He wanted to be the first to set foot on Ilos.

The hatch lowered and he stepped off. He eyes scanned the ruins that they landed in for some sort of console. He found nothing. Liara stepped off next and her blue eyes widened at the sight of the ruins, "Years of research and looking but I never would have thought I would actually be here."

Wrex was the next off. The krogan battlemaster breathed in the air, "Smells like shit."

Garrus followed him, "That would probably be Saren."

"That explains it." He grunted.

Chief was last off the Mako. He turned to see the metal door that they had almost crashed into. He asked Cortana to do a scan of it, "It's sealed from the other side but there is a power outlet to the north."

"Can you set a navpoint for Shepherd?" he asked.

"Already did."

Shepherd looked back and nodded, "Garrus, Wrex, Chief, stay with the Mako. Liara, come with me."

**\*\*On Ilos\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Shepherd and Liara raced for Cortana's navpoint. They were running out of time. Saren was already at the conduit. Every second they wasted, he was getting closer to his goal.

They descended a staircase into a large stretch of room. At the end of the room, a computer terminal sat with the navpoint on it. The two of them stopped in front of it as it keyed to life.

A red hologram appeared before them. They couldn't tell what it was of but it was intelligent. Shepherd's hand rested on the handle of his Kessler pistol, "Who are you?"

"I am Vigil. I scan that you are neither artificial intelligence or indoctrinated. That means our plan worked." The hologram spoke.

"Your plan?" Shepherd asked.

"Shepherd," Liara whispered, "you can understand it?"

"It must have been from the beacon. I can understand what it is saying." He told her.

"He's speaking Prothean, Shepherd." She told him.

"You're Prothean?" he asked Vigil.

"I was created by the Protheans to be the caretaker of this place. The remaining Protheans hid here to protect themselves from the Reapers." He explained, "They needed a plan to stop them from repeating the cycle."

"The cycle? What do you mean?"

"Every 50,000 years, the Reapers come into the galaxy to destroy all advanced organics. They use the Mass Relays and the Citadel to find us and they kill us." Vigil claimed, "The Citadel is of Reaper design, just like the Relays. The Citadel works as a massive Relay to bring the Reapers into the galaxy. When they come, they destroy our seat of government, spreading chaos and fear across the galaxy."

"That's why Sovereign needs Saren. He needs him to activate the Citadel so the Reapers can enter through it." Shepherd realized, "How do we stop him?"

"I can give you temporary access to the Citadel but only from the main station where the Council meets." Vigil said, "Every Council meets in the same location, the Citadel tower."

"Then, we must go." Shepherd said to Vigil.

"Yes, you must stop the Reapers. The information I gave you was at the cost of every Prothean life that was harbored here. As my power failed, one by one I had to shut down their life supports. Before long, they were all dead, leaving me here for you to find."

"You killed them all?" Shepherd asked the VI.

"Yes, it was the only choice of action. They programmed me to do so." Vigil said, "Now, go. Stop the Reapers. The door is open and the conduit is inside."

"Wait, you never explained what the conduit does!"

"We created it. It is a Mass Relay that will take you to the Citadel. Just, go!" The VI shut down, leaving Shepherd and Liara alone.

"Shepherd, imagine if I had years to study this place." She said.

"I know, Liara, but we don't have five minutes." He told her, "Let's go."

They raced back to the Mako and found that it was all booted up and ready to go. The metal door had opened up, revealing a long trench. Shepherd got inside and back to the controls.

"Who votes we take the vehicle into the creepy underground bunker?" Garrus called out.

"Good idea, the firepower will come in handy." Wrex chuckled as Shepherd sped through the doorway.

The Mako shot down the ramp and into the trench. Geth soldiers attempted to stop them but Garrus made short work of them with the cannon. Shepherd plowed through them, not slowing down.

As they drew closer to the end of the trench, they spotted the conduit. It really was a large Mass Relay and it was working. The disks spun around and the light shined down at them. Shepherd made the Mako go to top speed.

"Shepherd, are you going to ramp the Mako into that thing?" asked Garrus.

"Can you think of a better idea, Garrus?" he responded.

"No, just making sure what to put in my novel, Shepherd." The turian answered.

"Garrus, when this is over, you'll have a whole damn series to write."

"Let's hope we live that long, Commander."

The Mako shot off the ramp and into the Relay. Next stop, the Citadel.

**\*\*In the Combat Information Center\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

"This is Navigator Charles Pressly of the SSV \_Normandy\_ to Admiral Hackett of the SSV \_Kilimanjaro\_, please respond." The bald man said into the ship's comms. Kaiden doubted that Hackett would actually respond but he had been wrong before.

Together, the two officers stood in the CIC in their uniforms, hoping that they equaled one Commander Shepherd. To Kaiden's surprise, Hackett answered, "You better have a good reason for me not to blast you out of the sky, \_Normandy\_."

"Sir, Commander Shepherd has found Saren on Ilos. He is planning an assault on the Citadel." Pressly said to the fleet admiral.

"I'm sorry, Navigator, but I have a hard time believing you. You and your crew committed mutiny and stole an Alliance ship. You'll lucky I'm giving you the time of day." The older man responded.

"Admiral Hackett," Kaiden chimed in, "the Citadel and the Council is in danger. If you trust Shepherd, you would listen to us."

"Lieutenant Alenko, I expected more from you." Hackett stated, "You were always by the book, yet, you committed mutiny."

"Then, you should understand how important this is, Admiral."

Hackett sighed, "I'm sorry, \_Normandy\_, but request denied."

"But, sir," Pressly stated but Hackett waved him off.

"You are under arrest. Hackett out." The line went dead and Kaiden was at a loss.

Then, a Shepherd-like plan came to mind. If they couldn't get the Fifth Fleet to follow them to the Citadel, he could get them to chase them. He ran to the cockpit where he found Joker, awaiting his arrest.

"Joker, you think you could out run the Fifth Fleet?" Kaiden asked the pilot.

"Of course I could, Alenko." The pilot stated.

"Good, keep them on our tail but don't let them lose us." Kaiden jumped into the seat next to Joker.

"Kaiden, what the hell are you doing?" called Pressly, stopped behind him.

He looked back, "I'm doing what Ashley would do."

He slammed his hand down on a nearby button and watched as an energy shot fire from the \_Normandy\_'s front cannon. The shot missed the \_Kilimanjaro\_ but it got their attention.

"Lieutenant, you're crazy!" Pressly exclaimed.

Joker ran through the ship's controls, turning it around, "Time to play some cat and mouse."

**\*\*In the Mako\*\***

**\*\*On the Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

The Mako crashed into the wall. The Mako was upside down and useless, like it mattered, anyway. The tank would have been a problem with the Citadel's small doors and low ceilings. Wrex set his krogan foot on the hatch and kicked it open. The metal door flew down and landed on the metal surface of the Citadel.

The krogan was the first off the Mako, landing with a thud. He was happy to be out of the metal death trap. Liara and Chief followed him. Chief grabbed his rifle off his back and scanned the area. The Citadel was on fire. Buildings burns and dead bodies littered the streets. Reach, he thought, it looks like Reach.

He shook it off and looked back at his team. Shepherd and Garrus had made it out of the Mako and grabbed their own rifles off their backs. The five of them moved towards the elevator shaft.

"Watch it!" Garrus pointed, "Husks!"

Climbing up the side of the street, four human-looking creatures pulled themselves up to their level. Without hesitation, Chief popped two shots into the first charging husk. The shots took the creature's head clean off. Garrus fired a few shots from his Avenger rifle, killing his target. Liara wrapped one in a biotic fist and slammed him against the ground. Wrex charged at the final husk, knocking it off the ledge.

Shepherd stopped and opened his omni-tool, "Saren's making a move for the tower. We have to stop him."

They all nodded and followed Shepherd to the elevator hatch. As expected, the elevator was shut down. Chief unplugged Cortana from his helmet and attached her to the elevator's controls, "A little tinkering and there!"

The elevator hummed to life, "Which floor?"

Shepherd smiled, "Presidium Tower."

Cortana sent the elevator moving, "The geth are trying to stop us with viruses. It's kinda cute."

The elevator slowed down and flashed for a moment before returning back to normal. Chief's shields dropped to zero, "What was that for?"

"I'm using your suit's shields to power the elevator. Saren cut all power to the Citadel." She explained.

"Great, now, I'm unprotected."

"You'll be fine." She told him as the elevator stopped, "Just stay in cover for once."

"Thanks, but you know that's not how I work." He took her from the elevator's systems and pressed his hands on the door. Using his might, he pulled the doors apart, allowing his team to move through. He followed them and dove behind cover. Geth soldiers fired down on them from the staircase and ledges.

His shields hummed back to life as he popped out of cover. He fired two shots into a geth sniper, shutting off its flashlight head. Garrus crouched next to him with his sniper rifle ready. He jumped out of cover and took out two targets with ease.

Wrex and Liara combined their biotics to turn Wrex into a krogan wrecking ball. He charged at a geth prime and ripped through it like it was made of paper. Shepherd tossed a grenade mine at a rocket trooper and it exploded into a decent display of fireworks.

From a set of doors behind them, more geth were moving in. Shepherd and Chief turned to fight them but Garrus waved them off, "Go stop Saren! We'll handle these guys."

They nodded and raced up the staircase. At the top, the computer terminal they needed to access sat in front of them. Shepherd took a step towards it but was stopped by the hum of Saren's hover pad. The rouge Spectre tossed a mine at them and they dove for cover.

"We meet again, Shepherd." The turian sounded, "On Virmire, you made me think a lot on Sovereign's intentions. To end those thoughts, Sovereign upgraded me, making me stronger than ever. You can't stop the cycle, Shepherd. I am the future. I am both organic and synthetic. You could either die fighting it or embrace it, Shepherd."

"The Reapers want to destroy all life, Saren. Don't you see that? You'll end up dead just like the rest of us." Shepherd called out to him from his cover, "You're indoctrinated."

"No, Sovereign needs me." He stated as the Citadel rattled from the might of the geth fleet.

"Then, why is he attacking the Citadel while you're on it, Saren." Shepherd yelled back, stepping out of cover so Saren could see him, "We can work together, Saren. We can stop this before it gets worse. Together, we can defeat Sovereign and the Reapers."

Instead of taking the shot at Shepherd, Saren lowered his pistol, "You are right, Shepherd. I am a slave to Sovereign. I see that, now."

He looked at him, "There is only one thing I could do. Goodbye, Shepherd. Thank you."

He raised his pistol to his jaw line and fired. The bullet pierced through his skull and he fell backwards off his hover pad. He crashed through the glass and into the Council's garden.

Motionless, Shepherd stood there, pistol at his side. It should have been different but he couldn't change that. Chief patted his

shoulder, "We can think about it later."

Shepherd nodded and the two jogged up the staircase. Shepherd brought up his omni-tool, "This is Commander Shepherd. I am regaining control over the Citadel."

"Hell yeah, Shepherd," Joker's voice called through, "we're stuck on the other side of the Relay with the Fifth Fleet on our tail. Open the door and we'll be through."

"This is the \_Destiny Ascension\_." An asari's voice called through the speaker, "We are under heavy fire. We have the Council on board."

Shepherd cursed under his breath.

"Your call, Commander. Do you want us to help the Council or focus on Sovereign?" Joker asked.

"Helping the Council mean a lot of loss to the human fleet, Shepherd." Chief stated.

Shepherd nodded, "We'll need them alive. Joker, help the Council."

"Got it, Commander." Shepherd hit a few buttons on the console.

**\*\*In the Cockpit\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV \*\*\_\*\*Normandy\*\*\_**

**\*\*In the space around the Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Joker shot the \_Normandy\_ out of the Mass Relay with Hackett's fleet on his tail. They arrived to a Citadel under fire. He keyed his comms to Hackett's, "Admiral, I just want to point out that we were right."

"Shut up and focus your fire on those geth ships attacking the Council." The admiral answered back.

Joker smiled as he dipped the ship down into one of the geth ships. He fired a few shots into the shields and allowed one of the larger Alliance ships to finish it off. He repeated the same function until the geth ships were gone. With heavy losses to the Fifth Fleet, The \_Destiny Ascension\_ was safe, along with the Council.

"Alright, \_Destiny Ascension\_, you are clear to move to the Relay." Joker told them.

"Thank you, we owe the Alliance our lives." The asari claimed as it moved behind the fleet.

Joker looked to see that the arms of the Citadel were lowering, revealing Sovereign clamped onto the center tower. He shot the \_Normandy\_ in its direction with the might of the Alliance on her tail.

They unloaded everything had into the Reaper. The Reaper didn't seem to budge from the tower as massive energy shots and projectiles slammed into its side. Joker was beginning to wonder if the Reaper was unstoppable. Then, he thought about it. Shepherd's here. Nothing is impossible.

**\*\*In the Presidium Tower\*\***

**\*\*On the Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Chief looked at Shepherd and pointed down to Saren's dead body, "I'm going to make sure that he's dead."

Shepherd nodded at the Spartan as he turned and hopped down. Cortana spoke to him, "All vital signs show that he is dead."

The Master Chief pulled out Hawke's Smart Pistol and aimed it at Saren's head. He fired three shots into the turian's skull, "Had to make sure."

That was when he heard the sound of the Reaper outside the tower. It sounded like an electronic wale spread through the room. The sound effected Saren's corpse in a strange way. The turian's body shot red electrical currents out of it as it transformed from a humanoid alien to a robotic skeleton, "What do your vital signs say now?"

"They say 'run'." Was her answer.

The Saren husk stood to its full height and stared at Chief. It roared out a sound that shook the landing above. The landing's foundations broke, causing Shepherd to slide down to the garden below. Chief helped Shepherd to his feet and they pulled out their weapons. It wasn't over yet.

Saren lunged at them and they jumped to the sides. Chief fired a few shots from his Smart Pistol. The bullets hit the Reaper-made creature in the ribs but it didn't slow down. It hopped from the hanging cables and wires, looking for a way to kill them.

They kept moving, avoiding the hopping husk that wanted to kill them. They kept firing at them until Chief ran low of ammo and Shepherd's rifle overheated. Shepherd tossed his shotgun in Chief's direction. Without any former training, Chief grabbed the gun and fired at the husk.

The blast knocked Saren out of the air and brought him to the ground. Cortana showed that its shields were down so they opened fired. Give him everything had, Shepherd and Chief blasted his body to pieces until the Saren husk dissolved into a melted heap on the ground. They stood over the husk's body. They looked at each other and back at it.

They aimed their weapons at him and fired until their guns overheated.

Shepherd looked at Chief, "It's over."

"No," Chief stated, "it's only getting started."



That was when they heard the explosion. They looked back to see the remains of Sovereign crashing into the tower. The pieces smashed right for them and all they could do was duck.

\*\*I decided to wait on the enemy POV for a while. I'll use the sequel to help explain some of the missing pieces, instead. I'll probably have a chapter or two more for this story before I begin the sequel. I really hope you enjoyed my story and will continue to read into the next one.\*\*

\*\*Thank you for all your support and feedback.\*\*

## 17. Chapter 17: Only the Beginning

\*\*I do not own anything from these stories but I do own any original content.\*\*

\*\*Chapter Seventeen: Only the Beginning\*\*

\*\*In the Presidium Tower\*\*

\*\*On the Citadel\*\*

\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\*

Captain David Anderson entered the tower with his search team. Behind his team, Kaiden Alenko and the quarian, Tali'Zorah, followed them.

The tower was a wreck. Pieces of the Reaper Sovereign littered the room. The scene reminded Anderson of a gothic tower. The pieces looked like pointed spires surrounding a dark alter.

His team moved ahead with their omni-tool lights. They shined them into the cracks of the debris, looking for survivors. There was one survivor that Anderson really wanted to find. Shepherd had done everything he could do. Anderson wanted to make sure he lived to see it.

Anderson walked through the debris in his team's wake. Alenko and Tali followed suit, eyes scanning every piece of Reaper. They made it halfway through the chamber when they heard something.

"We got survivors over here!" one of the searchers called and Anderson's face lit up with hope. The three of them raced to his side to see a red faced krogan holding up a piece of Reaper debris. If the krogan let go, the piece would smash him and the two unconscious bodies under. Anderson identified them as the asari scientist and daughter of Matriarch Benezia, Liara T'soni, and the former C-Sec agent, Garrus Vakarian. That made the krogan, Urdnot Wrex.

Kaiden ducked inside and used his biotics to hold the piece for Wrex. The krogan picked Liara up in his massive arms like a baby and stepped out. He used his head to point back at the turian, "Someone might want to get the turian."

"I can get myself, Wrex." They turned to see Garrus picking himself up on one knee. He grabbed his nearby rifle and used it to bring

himself to both feet. He pushed pass the debris and out of their shelter. Kaiden stepped out behind him, letting the Reaper debris fall in its place.

Anderson grabbed Garrus's arm, "Where is he?"

Garrus raised his rifle and pointed up to the top of the tower. At the tip of his gun, the largest piece of Sovereign rested. Anderson understood what Garrus meant. Shepherd had been standing there when the pieces came in. The likelihood of the N7 agent's survivor had gone down by a good deal. He orders his men to keep searching, anyway.

Anderson turned back to see that Wrex had set Liara down on a broken bench. She was awake and her head was moving. Bruises turned the top of her head purple and some purple asari blood trickled down from her lip. She managed to speak, "Where's Shepherd?"

Nobody had the heart to tell the young asari anything. Anderson bent down to meet her at eye level, "We're still looking, Liara."

She looked at her team and nodded, "Anderson, there is someone else."

"Saren?" he asked.

Liara shook her head, "We can give more details later butâ€¦"

Her eyes widened as they stared up at the top of the staircase. They all turned to see what the asari saw. She must have sensed something before them because none of them saw anything.

Until a large green armored hand popped up on top of one of the pieces of debris, they saw nothing. The hand was joined by a black and red stripped hand next to as the two soldiers pulled each other up on top of the piece. With their other arms wrapped around each other's shoulders, they attempted to stand to their full height.

The green armored soldier managed to do so but the black and red stripped armored soldier was favoring his ankle. Anderson could see from where he was standing the N7 mark on his right breast plate. While he didn't recognize the green man, he could tell who the other man was. Commander Shepherd, the first human Spectre, was alive.

Anderson didn't bother suppressing the smile on his face. He jogged with Kaiden on his tail towards them. The green man began to move in their direction with Shepherd, dropping down to the level. Shepherd's face wrinkled but he was okay.

Kaiden draped Shepherd's other armor around his own shoulders and walked with the green man and Anderson back to where they gathered. The green man set Shepherd down on the bench next to Liara and looked at Wrex, "Twisted his ankle."

The krogan chuckled and patted Shepherd on the back. Anderson stood behind the green man until he turned around, "I don't know who you but thank you."

The man nodded and stuck out his hand, "I am Master Chief Petty

Officer Sierra-117. Don't take this the wrong way but you sound like someone I know."

The dark skinned man laughed, accepting the handshake, "Kaiden said the samething. Well, Master Chief, let's get you guys somewhere a little saver so I can hear all about everything."

They moved Shepherd down to the small field hospital that the Alliance set up. Inside, dozens of Alliance doctors and medical staff raced around, helping injured civilians and soldiers alike. Several surviving doctors from the Citadel joined them, along with Doctor Chakwas from the \_Normandy\_.

Anderson brought the \_Normandy\_'s crew into a separate section, closing the door. Doctor Chakwas nursed Shepherd's foot while each crew member explained what happened.

Shepherd started with telling Anderson everything he already knew. Noveria, Feros, Virmire had all happened prior to Shepherd stealing the \_Normandy\_, with Anderson's help. What Anderson wanted to know was the Mu Relay, Ilos, and their new green armored friend.

That was when Liara took over, ice pack on her forehead, "We got to the Mu Relay and Saren entered it. We followed and were hit by some sort of energy beam."

"The energy beam dropped us out of the Relay jump and into another universe." Garrus took over, "We came across a faction known as the UNSC and spoke with one of their admirals, Lasky."

"That was where we found a bridge between our universes, along with other universes." Tali explained, "Saren took it over and gained the support of the UNSC's enemies, the Covenant, along with others. That led to the Battle for the FIB, as we called it."

"The Battle for the what?" Anderson asked.

"The FIB." Chief said, "It stands for the Forerunner Interstellar Bridge. The Forerunners were an advanced group of people that lived millions of years ago and that most of our technology is based off of."

"Sounds like our Protheans." Anderson stated.

"Exactly," Liara said, "they are the Protheans, if the Protheans had millions of years to live, rather than 50,000 years."

"I see." The Alliance captain sighed, "What about the Reapers?"

Shepherd looked at him, "It's not over, Anderson. They are still out there and they will try again to destroy us."

The captain rubbed his chin and nodded, "Commander, as soon as you're able, we're meeting with the Council. They will want to thank you for saving their lives and they will like to know more about the Reapers. However, let's leave the talk about the different universes out of it."

"What are we supposed to do about me, then?" asked Chief.

"We tell them the truth, just not the whole truth. We tell them that Shepherd met you on route to Ilos. Nothing more, nothing less." He explained, "They will want to meet with you, too."

"I'm not really a diplomat, Captain." Chief stated.

"This isn't about politics, Master Chief. This is about you saving billions of lives. All of you did that. You have my thanks and the galaxy's thanks, as well." He told everyone in the room, "Shepherd, as soon as Chakwas clears you, find me."

Anderson turned and stepped out of the room. He rubbed his face. He couldn't wrap his head around what he just was told. Had they lost their minds? Did they go insane or bump their heads too hard? Was he going mad, too? He shook it off. Hackett wanted to speak with him about his "actions", anyway.

**\*\*On the Presidium\*\***

**\*\*On the Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Commander Shepherd wore his Alliance uniform, ribbons and all, as he joined the Master Chief in the elevator. Shepherd's ankle was feeling better so he knew it was time to speak with the Council. He didn't know about Chief, but he was nervous. The last time he spoke with the Citadel Council, he hung up on them. Maybe they will be happier to see him since he sacrificed human lives to save them.

The elevator opened up to the Presidium that they had arrived on via Mako through Mass Relay. It looked a lot better now that the lights were back on and fires were out. Shepherd could still see marks where the battle had taken place and where their Mako slammed into the wall. He wondered who had the job of explaining how an Alliance tank appeared on the Citadel's highest level.

Near the conduit, Shepherd spotted the Council, dressed in their elegant outfits. Talking to the asari, turian, and salarian councilors were Captain Anderson and the human ambassador, Udina. While he was glad to see Anderson, he wasn't too happy to see that Udina was there. It was Udina who wanted to keep them grounded at the Citadel instead of chasing after Saren. Shepherd didn't know what Anderson had to do to get the Normandy released but he was sure that the Ambassador wasn't content about it.

He walked next to the Master Chief and stopped in between Anderson and Udina. Udina stood on Shepherd's right while Chief and Anderson stood to his left. He stood up straight, "Councilors."

"Commander Shepherd," the asari councilor, Tevos, nodded, "on behalf of the entire Citadel Council and their respected government, thank you for your help in defeating Saren and the geth. Without you, we would not have been able to defeat this new enemy that you call the Reapers."

"Thank you, Councilor Tevos," Shepherd said, "but I wasn't alone. I had a team of the greatest people I know by my side. Anyone that got in our way, we got pass them to do our job."

He looked at Udina for a second before returning back to the councilors.

"And, you," the salarian councilor, Valern, looked at Chief, "we thank you as well. We don't know who you are but we know what you did for us. Thank you, Master Chief."

Chief nodded but didn't say a word.

"Now, on to another matter," the turian councilor, Sparatus, changed the subject, "we have decided, for humanity's sacrifice, that it is time for humanity to stand among the Council."

"We wish to grant humanity a seat on the Council." Tevos said, "While we have dozens of possible candidates, a recommendation from Commander Shepherd will go a long way."

"Are you asking me to choose the first human councilor, Councilor?" Shepherd asked.

Tevos nodded, "Without you, we would be dead and the Citadel would have been lost. Believe it or not, Commander, you are the savior of the galaxy. Your words carry great weight."

Shepherd was quiet for a moment. He ran through the different humans that could do the job. Hackett was a war hero and would never want to sit still for that long. None of his crew members would want the job, either. Only two people came to mind and they were standing next to him. Udina or Anderson. The choice was difficult.

While he disliked Udina, he knew how to play politic hardball. He knew when to throw his punches and when to hang on the ropes. That was something most people took years to understand but Udina was a natural.

However, Anderson is a soldier. With the Reaper threat incoming, the galaxy will need more people like him on the Council. He, also, trusted Shepherd. He knew that Shepherd wouldn't lie about the Reaper threat and would do everything in his power to get them ready for it.

Shepherd looked at two candidates before answering, "I choose Captain Anderson, Councilors."

Anderson shot him a look in disbelief but Shepherd continued, "Anderson knows the truth and will do whatever he can to fight for it. He's the greatest soldier and leader I know and he would be the perfect human councilor in these trying times."

"Are you sure about this, Shepherd?" Udina questioned, "A war criminal on the Council?"

"Anderson did what he had to do, Udina. You would have done the same, I am sure." Was Shepherd's answer.

"Thank you, Commander. We will take your recommendation seriously." Tevos bowed, "And, again, thank you for saving our lives."

**\*\*In the Cargo Hold\*\***

**\*\*Of the SSV Normandy \_**

**\*\*Docked at the Citadel\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy MEU\*\***

Commander Shepherd entered the cargo hold and was surprised to see that his whole team was down there. Garrus was packing up his rifles and gear into a cargo crate. Wrex was polishing his shotgun, sitting on his own crate. Kaiden, dressed in an Alliance uniform, leaned against the new Mako with his arms crossed. Tali was reading something on her omni-tool. Liara sat at the nearby desk, watching the others. The Master Chief, who Shepherd almost did not recognize out of his armor, held Ian Hawke's Smart Pistol in his hand, examining the weapon.

Shepherd stopped before them and placed his hands on his hips, "What's going on down here?"

Liara looked up and he saw light tears falling from her eyes. She gave the commander a shy smile, "We're just saying goodbyes."

"Goodbyes?" Shepherd asked, looking at Garrus.

Garrus turned and straighten himself up, "Commander, it's been real fun but it's over."

"It's not over, Garrus. The Reapers are still out there." Shepherd claimed.

"I know and I'm doing my part." The turian said, "I was going to stay on the Normandy until I got a call from someone important. Councilor Sparatus wants me to train to become a Spectre."

"Really, Garrus? That's great." Shepherd told him.

"Yeah, with two dead turian Spectres, Sparatus believes there is room for a new recruit."

"You will fill both of their places, Garrus." He told him, "If you need anything, let me know. What about you, Wrex?"

"I would like to stay but Tuchanka needs me, Shepherd. It is time Clan Urdnot rises again. If Virmire taught me anything, it is that the genophage can be cured and, when it does, the krogan will need to focus on something else besides killing." The krogan battlemaster sounded, "I will unite the clans under one banner and we will focus on bringing life to our children rather than taking life from others. If there was one thing you taught me, Shepherd, it is that."

Shepherd patted the krogan on the side of his armor, "I'm proud of you, Wrex. When we first met, you were a simple bounty hunter for hire. Now, you are the future clan leader of Clan Urdnot."

Shepherd turned to Tali. He could hear her trying to hide the sniffs under her helmet. He reached over and gave her a friendly hug. Over the course of a few months, Tali had become the little quarian sister

he never had. Without her, Shepherd knew that they would have never had got the chance to chase after Saren, "I'm guessing you're leaving, too?"

"My Pilgrimage is complete, Shepherd. I must go back to the Migrate Fleet and take my role with society. With the knowledge of the Reapers, I can help make the quarians ready for their incoming." She told him.

"You will be great, Tali'Zorah." He patted her shoulder and turned to Kaidan, "Don't tell me you're leaving, too."

"Reassignment, actually." The biotic said. Shepherd scanned his uniform and noticed something different. He got a promotion to staff commander, "Admiral Hackett himself recommended me for a job that I didn't think I would ever have the chance to do. I can't talk much about it yet but it will be big, Shepherd."

"I'm sure, Kaiden." He said, "You take care of yourself."

"I will, Shepherd."

Shepherd turned to Liara and crossed his arms, "Liara, you're not leaving."

She smiled, brushing her tears away, "Where would I go, Shepherd?"

Shepherd smiled, "Good because I feel like we will have more Prothean ruins to search through."

"I'm glad that I am useful, Shepherd." She stood up and turned to speak with the departing crew.

Shepherd walked up to Chief, "Where to, Chief?"

Chief smirked, "We have a lot of research to do, Shepherd. Cortana and Halsey are already pouring through every trace of data they can find on anything that could lead to the Focus Icon or the Bridge. In time, they will find something."

"Until then?" Shepherd asked.

"We could always go hunting geth." Chief stated and Shepherd smiled.

"How about a nap, first?" Shepherd said, pointing to the elevator.

"Sounds good to me, Commander."

**\*\*On the Main Bridge\*\***

**\*\*Of the UNSC \*\*\_\*\*Infinity\*\*\_**

**\*\*Over an unnamed Forerunner planet\*\***

**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy HU\*\***

Admiral Lasky watched as the Birmingham entered the wormhole,

disappearing back to their universe. It was hard for him to wrap his head around everything but it happened. He knew it happened. He had the causality list to prove it happened.

The sad part was that Lord Hood wanted to keep all this quiet. The men and women that died in the battle hadn't died because of an enemy from another universe. They died by a Covenant Loyalist assault. He didn't like lying about their deaths but the galaxy was not ready for this new found knowledge. The Sangheili agreed in that fact, as well.

Under Lord Hood's orders, the \_Infinity\_ would stand guard over the FIB until the Master Chief and Shepherd returned. That could take a while, Lasky thought. Chief had a way of taking his time in doing stuff. It took him four years to make contact with the UNSC after destroying the Ark, after all.

Lasky didn't mind waiting, however. He knew that they were doing the right thing. If the FIB fell into the wrong hands, the multiverse would come to an end. Lasky thought about all the lives they were protecting by standing guard. Not just the trillions that lived in their galaxy but the trillions upon trillions that lived in the other ones. They proved that there was life outside their galaxy with the arrival of the Jedi and the \_Falcon\_. They proved that there were other universes out there with the arrival of the \_Normandy\_ and the \_Birmingham\_, yet it was all a secret.

He heard the footsteps behind him and he turned to see Captain Dare, "What do I owe the pleasure?"

She handed him a datapad and Lasky read it to himself, "Well, welcome aboard, officially, Captain."

"Thank you, Admiral." She smiled, "ONI wanted one of their agents on board and I knew that you would not allow that to happen. I told them that I would be their agent since we have an \_understanding\_."

"Yeah, I run my ship and you don't poke your nose into things." He smirked.

"As long as I do that, you keep me in the loop." She returned the smirk.

"What do your superiors think about all this?" he asked her.

"They think it is a bunch of crap, to be honest. Since they didn't see any of it, they want it not to have happened. Since I did see it all, firsthand, I made sure to have them keep it in the back of their minds. They understand how important all this is, even if they don't know it."

"That's how I like my ONI; knowing but, still, in the dark." Lasky smiled, "Captain, if there is nothing else, I need to go to sleep. I can't remember the last time I laid down in a bed."

"Neither do I, sir." She smiled, letting him step over the bridge.

**\*\*Outside the M-COR \*\*\_\*\*Birmingham\*\*\_**



**\*\*In the Milky Way Galaxy TFU\*\***

The Birmingham shot out of the wormhole and set its course for somewhere safe. It drifted through space as it made its decision.

The Birmingham didn't know it but it had itself a hitch-hiker. The M-COR ship moved through space, unknowing to the fact that another ship was attached to the underside of it. The sensors could not pick up the small ship.

The green and brown private ship sat with its power off. The only thing it used was the gravity clamps that kept it from drifting away from the Birmingham.

Inside the ship, Boba Fett sat with his helmet off and hands behind his head. On his dashboard, small lights shined and audio came through. The audio was static so he twisted a few knobs until the voices were clear. He could make out the voices of Kyle Katarn and Jaden Korr as they talked in hushed voices in Jaden's room. Fett could make out little statements about bridges and icons. He switched another dial and he heard the voices on the bridge. He heard Vice Admiral Graves shouting out orders to his deck crew as they plotted a destination.

The bounty hunter smiled to himself on how easy it all was.

**\*\*Thank you for reading my story. This is the end of Halofall Star Effect but it is only the beginning for the storyline. I plan on four other stories that follow this one. The first one will be Commander Shepherd and Master Chief working together to stop the Collectors and find the Focus Icon and its bridge. The next one will be the Birmingham's mission to find the Focus Icon and its bridge in their universe with Jaden and Kyle's help. The third will be all four factions entering the Star Wars galaxy in hope to find the Focus Icon there and its bridge. The fourth, well, you will have to read the others to find out what that one will be.\*\***

**\*\*I really enjoyed writing this story and I want to thank everyone who read, comments, favorite, and followed this story and I hope you will continue to read into the stories.\*\***

## 18. Chapter 18: N-117

**\*\*I know it has been awhile and I know I promised a sequel so here it is. The first chapter to my new story, N-117, is published and I would love it if you all took the time to read it.\*\***

**\*\*Here is the URL in case you can't find it:\*\***

[s/10546406/1/N-117](https://www.fanfiction.net/s/10546406/1/N-117)

**\*\*Thank you so much for everything and I can't wait to hear what you think.\*\***

End

file.